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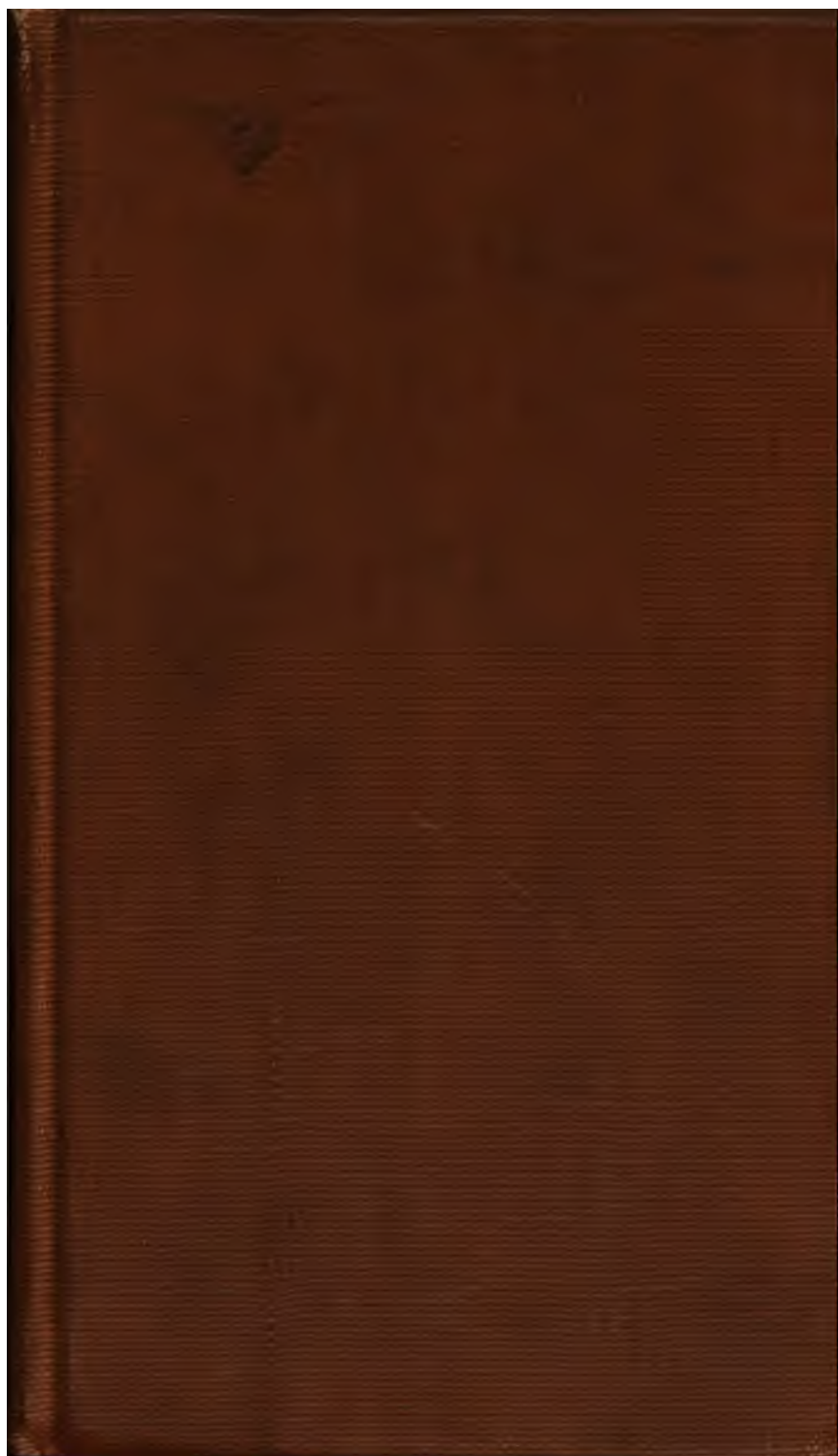
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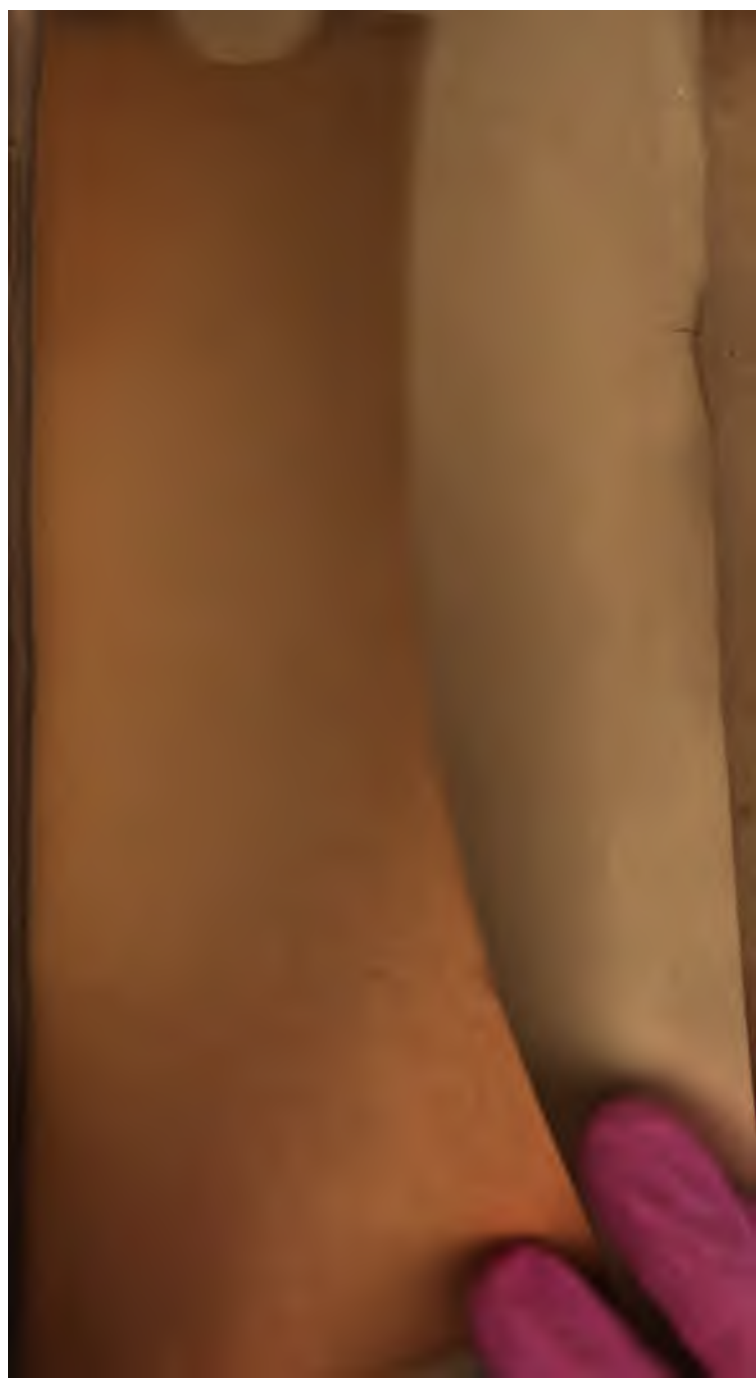
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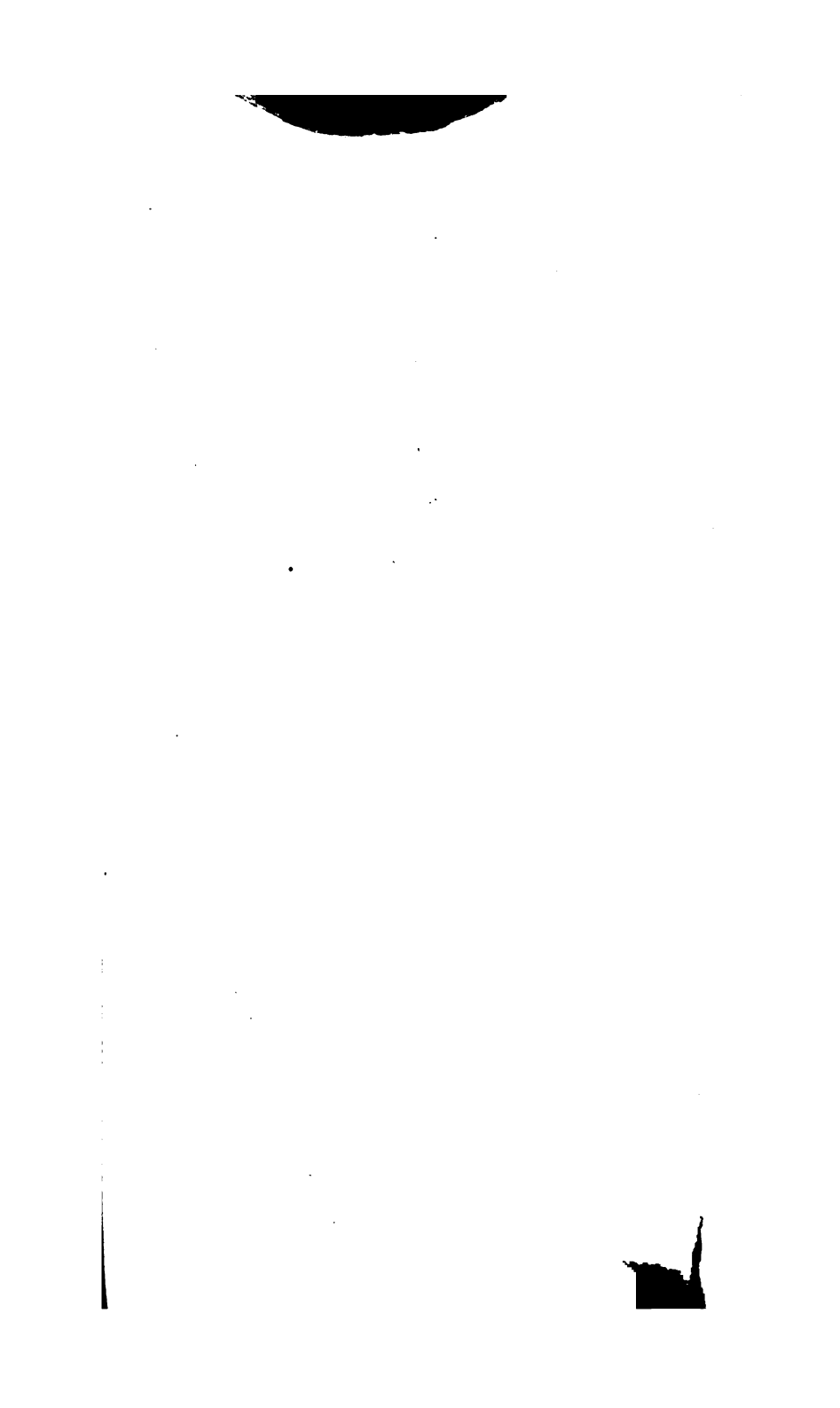


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**FAMILY RECORDS;**

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OR

**THE TWO SISTERS.**



BY

**LADY CHARLOTTE BURY.**

**IN TWO VOLUMES.**

**VOL I.**

**PHILADELPHIA:  
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## FAMILY RECORDS.

### CHAPTER I.

"Heaven forming each on other to depend,—  
A master, or a servant, or a friend,—  
Bids each on other for assistance call,  
Till one man's weakness grows the strength of all.  
Wants, frailties, fashions, closer still ally  
The common interest, or endear the tie.  
To these we owe true friendship, love sincere,  
Each home-felt joy that life inherits here."

POPE.

"WHAT can be the cause of your abstraction, dear Margaret," said the beautiful Susan Falkland to her sister, who was gazing intently from her bed-room window at the scene before her, apparently forgetful that her *toilette* was still unfinished, while Susan was engaged with the arrangement of her hair. "You have not uttered a word for this half hour, and you are not usually so slow in preparation for a fine day's enjoyment." A scarcely audible sigh was breathed at the conclusion of these words; and Margaret turned hastily from the objects of her late contemplation, to catch the reason of a sadness which her quick affection had perceived in her sister's manner. "You shall soon hear all that was passing in my mind, dear Susan."

"What! *all*, Margaret?"

"Yes, yes, all," rejoined she, as the mantling blood in her laughing cheeks almost convinced her more serious sister that she would not be as able as she was willing to fulfil her promise.

"Well then, first of all, as I threw open my window, and heard the sound of the mower's scythe, and the chirping of those dear swallows, who have actually begun to build two nests in this niche; I will confess that the sweet air of this spring day seemed sweeter

when my old nurse's superstition came to my mind; and I thought that you and I, darling Susan, should meet the fulfilment of our wishes on the same day. Then I thought of our poor dear father, and how sad he would be to part with us both: and so I sate down, with a more sober, and I hope less selfish feeling, to think of him, when I heard the laborers' breakfast bell, and saw a number of them crowding under the shade of the great maple tree to meet their children, with their meal in handkerchiefs and pitchers. They looked so picturesque that I began to sketch them; my old favorite Donald, was the first to take his bonnet off his reverend looking head, and then the rest followed his example, and they said a long thanksgiving before they opened their bundles. What a lesson to us, Susan! at least to me, for I am so thoughtless, I scarcely ever remember to say grace when"——

"When," interrupted her sister, who marked her hesitation; "when there is any one near," quickly rejoined Margaret, "in whose conversation I am interested. But never mind that. The history of my meditations is not yet completed; and now, do listen to me, for I think, Susan, you can help me in a plan I have been framing in this wise head of mine. Do you see that very large ship to the right of the bay? It is a brig which Donald told me is to sail next week for America, laden with poor emigrants. The Mac Leans and the Mac Intyres and the Cullens are all going in her; but I am not so much interested in them. They are well provided for, and take their wives and children, and all that they care for, with them, full of hope and happiness; but poor Mary is breaking her heart, because Dugald Sinclair told her, the other day, that he must give up the hope of marrying her, and go also, as the only means he can devise of procuring a livelihood for himself and his aged mother, who, you know, is a widow. He used to hold a farm of Eric Hamilton; but since he has sold that part of his estate, poor

Dugald has been turned out by the present landlord, and, from one cause or other, he has been obliged to sell all his goods to procure a wretched lodging for his old mother, who is too infirm to accompany him abroad. It would have grieved your heart, dear Susan, to see the distress of poor Mary, as she related the history of his misfortunes to me, sobbing piteously: and I wish you could help me in collecting a little money to keep Dugald at home until some employment can be found for him. Perhaps papa would take him into one of his farms, or perhaps I might speak to Eric Hamilton, and ask *him* if any thing could be done."

"I will willingly lend you my aid," rejoined Susan, "though I fear our united riches can scarcely effect your purpose: but make haste, dear, for the chapel bell has begun, and you will be late."

In a few moments, the sisters, arm in arm, were hastening to the chapel, where General Falkland and his household assembled every morning to listen to a portion of scripture and prayer reverently pronounced by the lips of his old chaplain. This gentleman had entered the family as tutor to General Falkland's only son, who had fallen an early prey to that fatal disease which wastes so many of the fairest flowers of our climate. Mr. Mac Farlane had remained ever since with the General, as his friend and companion; he was also the preceptor and faithful counsellor of his household and dependents.

It is a pleasant sight to behold the master of a family worshipping his God with those dearest to him, and daily engaging his dependents in the same reasonable service, when his temper and habits and occupations bear witness to his sincerity; there can be few better inducements to others to set the same example.

Kneeling by General Falkland, whose blanched head rested on his slender hands, were the graceful forms of his two daughters. Three young men of elegant



appearance joined their assembly, which for the rest consisted of decently attired household servants; and those country people, who residing in the immediate neighborhood, were invited to partake daily of the means of spiritual teaching, as well as the substantial comforts which the good General's charity provided for them.

As the family left the chapel, many were the blessings secretly bestowed on them by their poor but grateful dependents, and many a heartfelt wish for the present and future well-being of the lovely girls, who had ever a word or look of kindness doubling the value of their charitable actions.

It would have been difficult, indeed, for any person to have gazed upon their beautiful countenances, or watched the varying graces of their movements, without a feeling of more than common interest.

Susan, whose height, somewhat superior to that of her sister, lent dignity to her measured though light step, leaned on her father's arm with a look of confiding tenderness. Dark masses of brown hair were plaited in wreaths around a lofty brow of snow, which seemed, indeed, the throne of high and holy thoughts, tempered by woman's soft affections. Her features, chiselled with delicate refinement, escaped the harshness of Roman contour, though the slightly aquiline nose lent expression superior to the regularity of the Grecian. Her complexion, which never glowed with the faintest rose-tint, except in moments of intense excitement, was pale as hue of health could be; but the ruby tints of her smiling and delicate mouth, and the deep brown of her straightly pencilled eyebrows relieved her coloring from insipidity, and shed an increasing softness over the melting

"Blue of her large loving eye."

Her pale cheek received as it were a tinge of rose as she passed her sister, who, at that moment had accepted the proffered arm of young Eric Hamilton.

Blushing, and smiling, and almost bounding along the corridor, Margaret led the way to the breakfast room. The morning sun shone brightly through the long arched windows, and brightened into gold the light ringlets which played in rich profusion about her mantling cheeks and snowy neck, shading her laughing blue eye, as the slender boughs of the birken tree play over the sparkling stream. Her pearly teeth, disclosed by mingled smiles of youth, health, and joy, lent new radiance to her expression, each moment that she looked on or spoke to those she loved, and happy might *he* have been, on whom she now bestowed these smiles, had not a more intense but ill-fated attachment already filled his devoted heart.

Ah! had she known this at that early period of those sunny, bright, and trusting hours, she might have been spared the chilling lessons of after days: but would her heart have been so pure? would her will have been so chastened? would her lot have been so happy in the true estimate of happiness? *We* know but little, darkling is *our* way; but *He* who has the government, and is the arbiter of every event, can guide, and will bless all those who seek Him.

Few would have had the clear-sightedness to read in the glad countenance of Eric Hamilton, at that moment, aught but satisfaction in the society of the charming girl to whom he spoke, or to discover in his youthful and manly face traces of deep passion, and wild unruly feelings. Like the youthful Saxon of old, his complexion, at first sight betokened him to be of northern blood; and but for the dark eye-lashes and eye-brows, which shaded the upper part of his countenance, he would have been too fair; but his high marked features relieved them from effeminacy, while the firmly knit limbs, the breadth of shoulder, and tall grandeur of his figure, gave manly dignity to his graceful person. Those who knew him well, lamented that one ensnaring vice had already

led him far beyond the bounds of prudence and discretion, and stripped him of the only earthly hope which to him seemed happiness.

Following General Falkland and his fair daughters was the young Lord de Tracy, the son of a rich Irish peer. Though not regularly handsome, he had that indefinable air of elegance, which, even in the highest circles, is not acquired except where there exists mental refinement. Perhaps, indeed, it was that which constituted the chief charm of Lord de Tracy's manner, for his taste amounted sometimes to fastidiousness, and there was a doubtful cast about his smile which almost betrayed a sarcastic judgment, belying the flattering strain of his language.

Such was his expression as he looked on Eric and Margaret; but one more soft, and not the less interesting from being mingled with the fear which belongs but to one feeling of man's breast, played upon his features as he addressed Susan. They only conveyed the usual salutations of the morning; but they were the first words he had spoken to her whom he prized beyond every other human being; and his whole being assumed a more endearing aspect when he thought of or addressed her.

It was at Walrond Castle, therefore, that he appeared to the best advantage; and it was no matter of surprise to the friends of General Falkland, that, rich as was Lord de Tracy in the best gifts of nature and of fortune, the kind-hearted and single-minded General beheld in his prepossessing address, the promise both of moral excellence and mental superiority.

It was not so easy to ascertain, by Susan's manner in what light she viewed his attentions. The gentle tones of her voice when addressed to him were gentle too. Her eye could scarcely look severe, though to him it seemed almost awful. Her placid smile was given to all, though to some it might wear a more flattering expression than to others. At times, the full

and loving heart would throb with an emotion, which, though quickly checked by the dictates of duty, and a holier affection, could not be wholly stifled; but lent a glowing brightness to the eye, and a tender enchantment to the smile.. It was not when Lord de Tracy addressed her that such was to be sought or found.

*He* dared not think so; and the dread of failing even to excite such indications of feeling, lent additional zest to the eagerness with which he sought to win her favor.

Last among those who composed the breakfast party were the chaplain, and the son of General Falkland's best and earliest friend, since whose death young Evelyn Marchmont was wont to be a frequent resident at Walrond Castle. The same qualities which had endeared the father to General Falkland shone forth in the amiable character of his son, and seemed to restore the General to the happy days of his early friendship.

Few could behold the dark yet soft eye, the open brow, the calm and dignified, yet kind and warm expression of Evelyn's countenance, without acknowledging at once the power of goodness to beautify outward appearance: yet his was the worth which can only be fully appreciated by those who have drawn from the same unfailing source. Grace seemed as if it had found less to contend with in Evelyn's gentle nature than it is wont to meet in the sons of clay: not that he was meek from want of spirit to apprehend injury; but higher principles than those of mere worldly honor, directed his actions and actuated his conduct. A few of those who scarcely knew him, sneered at his retiring and quiet manner; but those well acquainted with the high worth of his character, the keenness of his feelings, and the warmth and devotedness of his heart, valued him, if not as highly as he deserved, yet more so than his humility allowed him to expect.

It was scarcely possible for any who breathed the same atmosphere with General Falkland's daughters (at least among the young) not to experience the influence of their ever varying charms; and Evelyn, whose heart had once expanded but to the general law of love, which seemed to pervade his view of every living thing, could not resist the fascination. The secret was his own; but the object of his preference had long been decided in his own breast, *whose* presence it was that gave the lustre of enjoyment to every passing hour, whose approbation was necessary to the complete satisfaction of duty he knew, and knew too well.

Such were the guests who assembled round General Falkland's table at the early breakfast hour of Walrond Castle. There are many who regard breakfast as the most unsocial meal of the day, who think that the party which separated, gay and lively, and perhaps loving, in the evening, meet in the morning with a degree of stiffness, and dullness, and apathy, which in the country can only be relieved by the entrance of newspapers and letters, or by the signal to separate once more for the sports of the field, or the cares of the household. There are those who eat their first morsel in solitude and in silence, lamenting the one, and only interrupting the other by sighs, while the vacant eye fixes on inanimate objects, become almost hateful by their well-known forms, so often looked at in the same disconsolate and lonely hours.

There are those who hurry over this hour, or rather the moments of a quarter of such an hour, as a necessary evil, that they may repair to the cares and business of a life of mental labor. There are those who think not at all, and begin their day when the sun has long past the meridian, with a yawn and a regret. No thanksgiving wakes upon their lips as they lift their drowsy eye-lids from a pillow rendered uneasy by dissipation and false excitement; no bright

and busy hopes fill their minds, while they adorn their persons with the *demi toilette of fashionable carelessness*, and begin the day with a meal tasteless and joyless, but which they lounge over till the hour returns when they may again mingle in the whirl of ceaseless intoxication called "pleasure." To all such, the hour of breakfast may be looked upon as the least pleasant of the many uneasy ones they spend; but not so did it appear to the inmates of Walrond Castle.

Though often bowed down by the memory of past misfortune, General Falkland was still strong in mental vigour, which seemed to lend a degree of activity to his body, almost prejudicial to his delicate frame.

Many an hour before he met with the inmates of his house he had spent in the study of God's holy Word and the arrangement of useful business, and it was to him a relaxation and a luxury to see his dear children with their young smiling faces enjoying the society of those whose united talents and beauty gathered around them.

To his daughters it was ever a pleasing time, for they loved to have some word of added kindness with which to greet him. To place his footstool, to lay before him some of the choicest flowers, or arrange some little plan for his delight. These were to them the daily charm of the breakfast hour; and oh! how anxiously was it looked for by those who loved them, those only can tell, who have experienced the charm of opening their eyes beneath the same roof that covers the beloved one; who have counted every moment till they shall hear the tones of a voice prized beyond the sweetest music, or gaze on a countenance which the most retentive memory could but faintly trace before the mental vision.

Happy hour to the young—the hopeful—the virtuous of intention! May the sun shine brightly round your board, and may its evening smile, if less dazzling, be yet more serene!

## CHAPTER II.

"Life, I repeat, is energy of love,  
Divine or human; exercised in pain,  
In strife, and tribulation; and ordained,  
If so approved, and sanctified, to pass  
Through shades and silent rest, to endless joy."

WORDSWORTH.

GENERAL FALKLAND was the youngest son of his family; and as his elder brother was sole heir to his father's property, he entered the army at an early age, with no prospect for the comfort of his after years, but advancement in that profession. Born of an ancient Scottish family, like many of his countrymen of the same condition, his father's lands were far more extensive than productive; and it was perhaps in favor of all parties that the proud law which entails the whole portion on the eldest son was enforced in his family, since a division would have lessened the comforts of one, without greatly enhancing those of the other.

Young, active, and full of hope, the heart of General Falkland bounded at the prospect of success in arms which seemed to open before him; nor was he disappointed. His career in India was brilliant and prosperous; and he had returned to his native country still in the vigour of life—high in command—and with a name honorably prominent in the most celebrated campaigns of that period.

General Falkland returned home unmarried. His well-earned renown and noble birth insured him a welcome reception to the highest circles; and the fascinations of person and manner which he possessed rendered him a universal favorite of the fair; but to one alone did he devote his every power to please; nor did he strive in vain.

The beautiful Lady Louisa Clifford scarcely entering into womanhood, was gifted beyond her years with sense and worth rarely united to so much loveliness.

Her entrance into the world had been hailed by the flattering incense of general praise, and particular homage; but she gave to him alone the enchantment of her young heart's love, and the fond assurance of being in life and death only his.

On that delightful certainty, General Falkland was fain to lean; for they had to encounter what was to her an insuperable obstacle—the opposition of her parents.

Lord Clifford, equally proud and ambitious, pertinaciously refused his consent, on the score of General Falkland's want of fortune.

For years were the health and spirit of Lady Louisa wasted in that sickening pang of hope deferred.

Faithful still to one, though in the midst of a throng of lovers and admirers, many of whom sought to swerve her from her first affection.

On the death of his brother, who had never married, General Falkland became heir to his father's estates; and Lord Clifford's only objection being thus removed, their constancy was rewarded, and they were at length united. The lapse of years, and pining anxiety, had reduced Lady Louisa to a state of health so delicate, so frail, that her pale countenance seemed scarcely to belong to one of earth.

With a view to revive what never could be restored again, though nurtured by love's tenderest care, General Falkland took his bride to the more genial climate of the south, almost immediately after their union. Three short years was the sum of their wedded life—years of uninterrupted union, and devoted tenderness, but impaired by the unceasing dread of losing so much happiness. Unlike the generality of those who sink beneath the wasting hand of consumption, Lady Louisa



was fully aware of the nature of her disease; and, ever mindful of the great first cause of all sickness and all sorrow, felt in this, as in every other circumstance of life, with her beloved husband, and looked upon their present enjoyment as something beyond the ordinary lot of sinful mortality. While she patiently awaited the summons which was to sever her from so blissful a tie, she accused herself constantly of want of gratitude and devotion, since the sad thought that she must so soon leave the partner of her joy to suffer and to mourn, too often clouded the heavenly prospect set before her.

Two daughters were born to them in the first years of their marriage. Scarcely had Lady Louisa given birth to a son, when, leaving this last consolation to cheer her bereaved husband, she breathed her parting sigh upon his bosom, and gently sunk into earth's last slumber—to wake but in heaven.

Having laid her remains in the English cemetery at Leghorn, General Falkland hastened to his now bereaved home with his three little ones, resolving to devote his life to them, and the pursuit of every useful and beneficial object for his friends and dependents. And truly seldom did more blessed result proceed from a determination not lightly made, because under the sway of powerful emotion, amid the sighs and tears of afflicted nature, but also sanctified by prayer, and drawn from the source of all holiness. Long after success had rewarded, in many instances, such virtuous endeavors, the humility of General Falkland remained unimpaired: his dread of failing still increased, and his unceasing diligence in the use of every means for the education of his children, and the welfare of all within the sphere of his influence.

What mortal judge could or would have deemed that such a character—so gentle, so amiable, so purified in mind, so chastened in heart—should require the fiery trial which yet awaited him?

The finest gold will stand the most refinement; and such of human kind was General Falkland. Scarcely had his son reached the age of fifteen, when the sickness which had long given anxiety to the heart of a doting father, increasing tenderness to the affection of his sisters, and redoubled zeal and love to the instructions and advice of his friend and preceptor, terminated fatally.

The early years of this cherished boy had given promise of all that was most amiable and endearing to to his sorrowing parent and friends; there were few cheeks unstained—few hearts unmoved—as the melancholy procession bore the remains of the beloved youth to his last earthly home: and long and deep was the mourning of Walrond Castle. Time indeed, which lends its soothing and the more blessed and permanent influence of Christian resignation, served in some measure to alleviate the heart-rending pangs of his afflicted father; but never does such a sorrow leave its victim as it finds him, and never again did the General resume that health or those spirits which had seemed to dawn again after his first bereavement; but the smiling graces of his lovely daughters, their fond affection, and the unceasing tenderness of such attentions as woman only knows how to bestow, gradually aroused their dejected father in some degree from his affliction; nor did he lose a sense of the consolation arising from the society of the amiable Evelyn, the son of his earliest and dearest friend.

He was some years senior to his departed son, but had been the companion of his studies and amusements—his gentle and friendly monitor on many occasions where the advice of one less sympathising in the feelings of youth might have been disregarded.

A combined tie of gratitude and friendship therefore united to place Evelyn as it were in the room of his lost child in the affections of General Falkland; and a more grateful and filial return has seldom been paid

by one similarly situated. Next to his own father, Evelyn loved and revered his elder friend with all the devotedness of his nature; and precious to him were those early days spent with that dear old man and his daughters.

He almost reproached himself for feeling so averse to return home when the seasons came in which he was expected there; nor was he for some time aware of the secret spell which bound him in fetters never to be loosed, to that most loved spot on earth. Who that has ever known something of that secret but powerful sway which a pure untold affection holds over the young, will wonder that, nursed as affection was by daily intercourse with all that was most endearing in female beauty of mind and person, his tenderness should possess all the doubts and anxieties as well as the enchantment and the joy of love? His passion remained a secret, not only to its object, but also to General Falkland; for, accustomed as he had been to regard Evelyn in the light of a brother to his children, he scarcely observed the various emotions which to a stranger's eye might have been betrayed when in the presence of the youngest of the fair sisters; or when he heard her named, if for a moment they were separated.

A few years spent on the Continent had served to enlarge his ideas, and improve his tastes; but not to take from his manner the charm of youthful modesty, which in Evelyn was not the effect of awkwardness or inward self-love, but the evidence of genuine purity of heart, unsullied by the world's contamination. It was difficult to resist the charm of his manner. United to this diffidence, a confiding sense of the approbation of those who loved him, and a watchful eagerness to anticipate their every wish, not only in matters of importance, but in those daily nameless little services which strew the path of life with flowers. Yes, flowers they are—those courtesies which even

the sacred Word condescends to enjoin ; and which, like the modest daisy, may beautify the rocky hill, the else barren moor, the lonely path, the secluded nook, as well as the borders of the cultivated garden, or the emerald of the smoothy verdant lawn.

Desirous as General Falkland felt that the minds of his children should be cultivated by useful study, and their tastes nurtured by the prosecution of those accomplishments to which their wishes led them, he had not thought as yet on the formation of attachments which constitute the chief happiness of woman's fate ; or if such had ever mingled with his contemplations, they had been apart from any individual as being the arbiter of their destiny. He rightly judged that where the heart is pure by exercising the love of God and man, and the judgment enlightened by the study of holy and virtuous principle, the fate which Providence allots to such will be met serenely, if not joyfully ; nor did he fear the result for those over whom his heart yearned with all the devotion and the tenderness of a father's love, as he saw his daughters' mental and personal charms daily increasing. He wished them to participate in the society of those who would increase their interests, and appreciate their excellencies ; and for this purpose, he resolved that they should accompany him in his first visit he had made to London since his widowhood. Those only who have known what violence is done to the heart by renewing a long-broken intercourse with the world after years of suffering and sorrow in which that world cannot participate, after spending them in the society of such only who have watched every look and movement, and anticipated the possibility of a rude or jarring touch to the bruised feelings, can enter into such emotions as were experienced by General Falkland, when a sense of duty to his daughters brought him once more back to the scenes of his youth and early happiness.

True it is that he found on his first return to London the truth of those words, that he who forgets the world is "by the world forgot." But there were a few who recognised the once popular and universally *recherché* Adrian Falkland in the broken down, though still elegant person of the General; and through the medium of those few who failed not to spread the fame of the beauty and grace of his daughters, he soon found himself surrounded by a host of daily visitors: some companions of earlier years; some, among the young and fashionable, and many more among that nameless and numberless band of idlers who are wont to hover round the doors of the hospitable, whenever such wonders appear in the heartless circles of the gay world. It was then only that General Falkland began to tremble lest the fascination of such a life to the young and beautiful, might exercise too powerful a sway over the minds of his daughters. It was then that he first looked around the circle of his acquaintance with the thought which among them were most likely to insure a virtuous woman's happiness; and on which, among their many admirers, they seemed to smile with most approval.

Lord de Tracey, the only son of a noble house, of whose character and manners General Falkland had the highest opinion, was one of the most constant of their visitors, and him General Falkland regarded with unmixed favor. He scarcely knew whether his attentions were most devoted to Susan, or to her sister; for, with diplomatic care, he took pains to conceal at once from them and from the world that his intentions were of a particular nature; but the good General thought, whichever was the object of his admiration, she would be a happy woman; and he failed not to be pressing in his invitation to Lord de Tracey to visit them on their return to Walrond Castle. Many others were included also in this invitation, though perhaps few were so much desired by General Falkland.

Walrond Castle became, for once, on the return of the family, a scene of gaiety very unlike what had been witnessed in that quiet neighborhood for years.

Parties of sporting young men, scientific travellers, and tourists, were again admitted within the hospitable gate of Walrond Castle, nor ever left them without regret. There was matter of interest and of pleasure, both, at Walrond Castle, and its beautiful neighborhood. But winter came, and its inhabitants were once more left to the happy quiet of their own family, with the exception of him who was almost reckoned one of its number—Lord de Tracey, who returned to renew his hopes, and open the way for the avowal of them, and young Eric Hamilton, who still possessed, in the immediate neighborhood, a small portion of those estates from which he had been forced, through his imprudence, to part. Towards him, General Falkland had ever evinced the greatest indulgence, nor had he failed to discover the good qualities of this interesting though imprudent young man, nor to offer to him his kindest advice, and the entrance of his house as his home. Alas! had poor Eric earlier known to value so valuable a friend, he might have been spared the days of vain regret and heart-rendering sorrow which awaited him.

### CHAPTER III.

"There's Lowrie, the Laird o' Drumellar—  
Gude day to ye, brute, he comes ben;  
He brags an' he blows o' his sillar;  
But wha will I hae' but Tom Glen."

BURNS.

WHILE we have been reviewing the past days of General Falkland, breakfast is over, and now some of the party are rising, and some of them are opening the doors of the conservatory, and forming nosegays of the sweet flowers which fill the sunny room with their fragrance. Susan is leaning pensively against the marble chimney piece, certainly not thinking how beautiful the outline of her figure shows in the mirror opposite, for her head droops upon her arm, and her eyes are cast upon the ground; but there is one who watches with her mingled feelings of admiration and of love heightened by the fear lest that heart, whose throbbings are unnoticed by any eyes but his, should never beat for him. Margaret has twined her white hands round her father's neck, and is in the attitude of eager solicitation, awaiting his reply to the soft but energetic tones of her voice; and seldom has that voice uttered to his ear the language of entreaty. Evelyn is turning over the leaves of the Naturalist's Journal; but there is a smile upon his eloquent though thoughtful countenance not excited by the contents of that charming volume. There is a melancholy in that smile, mingled with affectionate approval of the object of his mind's contemplation.

"Well, dear tormentor," said General Falkland to his Margaret, as he kissed her sunny brow, "you shall have your wish, if I can arrange matters justly, to the satisfaction of all parties; so away with that anxious look, which so ill becomes you."

"Thank you, thank you, dearest papa; you are the best, the kindest"——The words died away upon her lips as she flung her glossy ringlets off her eyes, and looked around for one whose absence ever threw a shade over her countenance. At this moment she wished particularly to speak with him on a subject near to her heart; but, ashamed of betraying her mortified surprise, she stooped to caress her favorite dog, and remained longer engaged in that amusement than the occasion seemed to warrant, while she listened to the General's demand of, "What has become of Eric Hamilton?" and Lord de Tracey's reply. "He had scarcely swallowed his coffee when he rose up, as if struck by some sudden and wonderful thought, and rushed out of the house: see! there he goes galloping on that unfortunate horse of his, which he will certainly kill some of these days. Elliott is reckoned a hard rider; but Hamilton beats him by twenty minutes to the hour, I should think, at least." General Falkland rose, and walked to the window. "He is a wild fellow," said he, "and is apt to take strange fancies. He is going towards Benlever; perhaps some business of his own: but he did not apprise me of it. No matter; we shall see him, I dare say, in the evening: and then, Evelyn, you may tease him about Miss Mac Call's attractions. Poor fellow! Sir Thomas has no son, and it were a good thing for him, could he marry her, and so regain his property." A gleam of joy passed over Evelyn's countenance.

"No, General!" replied he; "I will not venture to touch on that subject, although, perhaps, I might safely do so: for I think there is little in Miss Mac Call's charms to attract the taste of such a man as Hamilton."

"You had better not," rejoined Lord de Tracey, "except you reckon on a morning meeting on the ground yonder; sixty paces," continued he laughing, "myself *your* second, Marchmont: but where will Hamilton find one? I should be sorry for poor Miss



Mac Call; though her unbeaming blue eyes and ceaseless smile put me rather out of humor; for were she to become Eric Hamilton's wife, he would break her heart in a week."

"You are severe, my lord," said General Falkland, who scarcely gave him credit for the bitterness of feeling which dictated Lord de Tracey's words. Margaret's eyes flashed fire, and her cheek blushed to an unwonted glow. Evelyn dared not gaze upon it; but he saw the gentle Susan glide softly from the room and he feared lest Margaret should follow, as the rustling of her silk gown passed the spot where he was seated. But he was mistaken. Without seeming to have heard the previous conversation, she went up to her father, and requested his advice, as to the plans for the day. "Everything without looks so beautiful," said she, "it is a pity not to enjoy the fine weather." Yet, as she spoke, she felt but too sensibly that no pursuit could afford pleasure to her, in the absence of him who occupied the first place in her thoughts.

"What think you, love," said General Falkland, "of going up Gleniffar? Susan has proposed me a sketch of the ruin; and this is the first day I have seen for months, in which I think she might safely sit in the open air, without catching cold. I will drive one of you in the curricule, and, perhaps, you or she will ride, under the escort of the gentlemen?" Margaret approved, the gentlemen were delighted; and she was just leaving the room to join her sister, when the door opened, and the servant announced Sir Thomas Mac Call. "Deuced bore!" muttered Lord de Tracey; but so low, that no one heard it but Margaret, who disliked Lord de Tracey as much as her nature would admit, because he had ever a slighting word to say of him she loved. "I scarcely expected him this morning," said General Falkland, mildly; but the quick and sudden step of Sir Thomas was heard in the hall; and ere he had concluded, Sir Thomas was making his in-

elegant salutation to the General, waving one of his short arms, at the same time with a look of familiar condescension to Margaret, and slightly noticing the gentlemen, who returned his greeting with something scarcely like a welcome. "Hope I don't intrude, General," said he, laughing immoderately at his plagiarism. "Hope the ladies are well—see but one of them, as rosy and as blushing as my Sophy. Miss Susan is always pale—a little sickly, I am afraid. Eh! Miss Margaret! Ladies will complain sometimes; but I hope nothing serious."

"My sister is quite well, I thank you," said Margaret, scarcely endeavoring to repress the smile which played upon her countenance.

"Well! oh, I'm glad of that—well in health, I dare say; but a little love-sick, that's all—hope she may soon rally—there is life in a muscle yet—should not wonder to see her quite fat and sousy, like my Sophy, some of these days. Eh! what say you, General?"

General Falkland bowed. "Miss Mac Call certainly appears to be in excellent health."

"She is, she is," rejoined the voluble Sir Thomas, "thank goodness, none of your affected, mealy-mouth'd lasses, like some of the present day; eats her porridge and milk, of a morning, like a good one." "Then I should think she was mealy-mouth'd," muttered Lord de Tracy. Sir Thomas did not hear him. "Walks fifteen miles a day, and don't disdain a glass of my toddy of an evening. That's a lass worth looking at—eh, General? that will be worth salt to her meat, and will get both, please the pigs."

General Falkland, with his wonted benevolence, humored the vulgar self-complacency of Sir Thomas Mac Call, and replied that he did not doubt Miss Sophia Mac Call scarcely required more than an ordinary share of worldly possessions, since nature had endowed her with so great a portion of personal attractions.

Ay, ay, General, very true, she may not need them now, and there may be some designing fellows who pretend to think so, in another way than you do yet: but I am up to them. Let them laugh that win; but let them keep a sharp look out on such as would regain the prize that they have lost. As I was turning the corner house on this side the village, I met that helter-skelter fellow, Eric Hamilton, galloping on the road which leads to my property, as if the devil were at his heels—I knew where he was going: but lest he should see me, I bolted into the public house and gave him the slip. I dare say he thinks to find Sophy at home, and that she will listen to all the soft things he will tell her: but he'll be mightily mistaken; for I sent her away to meet some friends we expect, and she will not be home till evening. So I'll let him have his ride for nothing."

"Mr. Hamilton did not apprise me whither he was going to day," replied the General; "but if such was the object of his early expedition, he can but be pitied for his disappointment."

"Pitied!" exclaimed Sir Thomas, his choler rising in fiery evidence on his already heated face. "Pitied! I would not pity such a fellow were he to be banished the country for ever: an ill-doing spendthrift, who has no more regard for people of property and condition than my stots."

"You had better not let Hamilton hear you speak so," interrupted Lord de Tracy, who now, contrary to his usual proceedings, provoked by the vulgar petulance of Sir Thomas Mac Call, stood on Hamilton's defence.

"I don't care who hears me," rejoined Sir Thomas. "He's a spendthrift—that all the world knows."

"But not an *ill doer*," rejoined Lord de Tracy, imitating, as if unconsciously, the broad Scottish accent of Sir Thomas, "and you are the last person who ought to reproach his imprudence, since you have been so much the gainer."

"The gainer!" exclaimed Sir Thomas. "The loser, you mean; for I paid more for those barren moors than they are worth; and as for the house, it was an ill-favored, old-fashioned, tumble-down concern as I ever set eyes on, till I spent above a thousand in repairing and re-building it, and twice that sum in furnishing it anew.

Poor Margaret sighed audibly; for, quick as the mind can glance over long years of mingled hope and fear, she thought of the happy days she had spent in early childhood beneath the roof of her companion. She remembered the hours for ever gone, when, with her sister, she had loved to watch the shadows of the venerable trees dancing on the tapestried walls of the room which they together occupied; of the dear old-fashioned furniture, and the family pictures which she loved as friends; and of the thousand recollections endeared by present regret. She had been at ——— since the greatest part of the estate had become the property (as Sir Thomas loved to call it) of the present possessor. But the venerable trees were levelled to the ground, a broad red gravel walk surrounded a large plat of grass, gaudy figured papers had replaced the tapestry; hunting prints were seen where the ancient family portraits once hung, save where a staring resemblance of Sir Thomas Mac Call, in the dress of the Provost of Pollockshaws, gave unwelcome remembrance of *his* being the proprietor. All this was brought to Margaret's memory as Sir Thomas continued to recount the large sums he had expended in the *improvement* of the place. Evelyn could not refrain from taking a transient glance at her, and keenly and bitterly did he feel the regret which he saw depicted in her countenance; yet so devoted was the nature of his affection, that he felt the next moment as if he could forego every best and dearest hope, if by the sacrifice he could secure her happiness. Not such were Lord de Tracey's feelings,

Susan that moment re-entered the room. Although not destitute of kindness, Lord de Tracy's principles and conduct were formed on a different model than were those of Evelyn Marchmont; nor had he learned to surrender his own wishes to those of another, even where that other was the object of his warmest regard. In the present instance, he saw in Eric Hamilton a dangerous rival; nor did he scruple in determining to use every effort to supplant him, should he have already gained, as he feared, some ascendancy over the mind of Susan.

He deemed this moment a suitable one for the display of an amiableness of feeling, not at that moment quite genuine, since by doing so he might place himself in a favorable light in her eyes: he therefore prolonged the theme on which Sir Thomas loved to dwell, by taking Mr. Hamilton's part—pleading youth, inexperience, and bad companions, in extenuation of his imprudence; and concluded in a laughing manner, which obliged Sir Thomas to repress his rising ill-humor, by saying, that he could not but regret he was proprietor of——.

Sir Thomas was now fain to turn off the subject, and began to apologise for the state of his toilette to Miss Falkland. "You must just forgive me, Miss Falkland, for my boots being so dirty, but really the roads are in such a state, it is impossible for a man to ride clean. When I was Provost of Pollockshaws, which you know I was, three year ago, I made such rules and regulations for the cleaning and repairing of the roads, that it was like walking in a parlour to go out in that neighborhood: but you, Highlanders, have but little notion of these things, though I trust we shall soon see some improvement." This he added with an expression meant to be arch, but which resolved itself into impudence, as he looked up in the placid countenance of General Falkland, who patiently awaited the time when this vulgar ebullition should

cease, and he should regain his liberty. But General Falkland's hopes were soon disappointed; for, rising to ring the bell, Sir Thomas continued, "If you please, General, desire one of your idle fellows to bring me a pair of slippers, for I must be rid of these Wellingtons, or the damp will bring on the gout in my stomach." So saying, he sat down, and actually began, to the consternation of the ladies, and the evident disgust of Lord de Tracy and Mr. Marchmont, to draw off his boots in their presence. "Don't be shocked, ladies," said he, while the exertion redoubled the crimson of his cheeks. "Don't be shocked, pray: my stockings are clean; not that the mud would come off, or, if it did, that it would signify, as your carpet, I think, seems rather old (stopping to examine the pattern of the Turkey carpet), but it don't agree with me to sit with damp shoes on, and, at home, I always make Sophy pull off her shoes on the mat; because ~~my~~ <sup>my</sup> carpets are all span new: so some people may know what to expect." As he finished the last sentence, the boot fell from his foot, and discovered a huge pair of broad misshapen feet, one of which he quietly placed on the chair where Lord de Tracy was seated. The latter immediately arose, and walked away in silent indignation; but Margaret, to whom the concluding speech had been addressed, reddened with disgust, as the revolting thought, that the familiarity which Sir Thomas had evinced towards her since she had first met him, was an indication of more marked favor towards herself, on his part, than her philosophy could brook, or than ever her mirthful disposition could help her to shake off.

"Now then," said Sir Thomas, as the servant brought in the shoes, "now then," thrusting his feet into them, "to business, General, as I was saying"——

"I will attend to you immediately," interrupted General Falkland, who felt that the patience of the rest of the party would be exhausted sooner than his own.

will attend to you directly ; but I know, Sir Thomas, your regard for the ladies is too great to allow of their hearing the discussion of county business, which must be uninteresting to them. They had just arranged a plan for the enjoyment of this fine day ; so, if you please, we will part with them for to-day, and discuss our business quietly in the library, where we shall be uninterrupted.

"Oh ! certainly, certainly," said Sir Thomas, with ineffable condescension, as he rose to follow General Falkland to the library : then, waving his hand with the same grace with which he had entered, he passed through the door, which the latter held open for his exit.

"You will drive or ride, loves, as you like," said General Falkland to his daughters, "and I may perhaps join you on your return." The ladies agreed, on their united wish, to ride ; and accordingly a few moments saw them equipped, and Lord de Tracy and Mr. Marchmont laden with sketch books, pencils, &c., riding beside them in unfeigned enjoyment.

## CHAPTER IV.

"Vivre en soi, ce n'est rien ; il faut vivre en autrui  
A qui puis-je être utile, agréable aujourd'hui ?  
Voilà ce que chaque matin il faudroit se dire :  
Et le soir, quand des cieux la clarté se retire,  
Heureux à qui son cœur tout bas a répondu,  
Ce jour qui va finir je ne l'ai pas perdu ;  
Grace à mes soins, j'ai vu sur une face humaine  
La trace d'un plaisir, du l'oubli d'une peine."

WHEN Eric Hamilton heard from Margaret the history of his late tenant, Dugald Sinclair, of the fate which awaited him, the sorrow of his aged mother, and the wretchedness of the girl to whom he was affianced, a crowd of generous feelings, mingled with self-reproach, rushed across his mind; and he that instant resolved to devote his utmost endeavors to replace poor Dugald either in that farm from which Sir Thomas had ejected him, or in one which he hoped still to find vacant on the small portion of his once extensive lands which he could still call his own. Without, therefore, holding forth to Margaret so sanguine a hope as he privately entertained, he resolved immediately to enquire of Sir Thomas whether misconduct had been the cause of Dugald's dismissal; or, failing to obtain any information from him, to make inquiries as to the possibility of finding some employment for him on his own estate. The resolution was made with an unmixed feeling of benevolence, for his generous disposition ever prompted him to treat his inferiors with kindness, especially whenever he remembered their necessities. Alas! that the love of excitement, and the impetuosity of his temper, had hurried him on to deeds of imprudence, irremediable in their effects! Alas! that the honorable sentiments natural to him were unnurtured by a father's advice or a mother's care! Of both parents he had been deprived in early childhood; and till he returned



from scenes which had witnessed his fatal though short career of extravagance, he had forgotten that in General Falkland he might have sought and found a counsellor who never would have misled him.

As Eric Hamilton rode swiftly past the castle enclosures where Lord de Tracey had observed him, the prospect of the kind action he projected, the freshness of the soft spring air, added to the buoyancy which his favorite exercise lent to his spirits; and a flood of joy rushed across his mind at the thought that Susan would approve him, and gave redoubled zest to the eagerness with which he pursued his way. It was not then surprising that he should not have observed Sir Thomas's horse standing at the door of the little inn by which he passed so rapidly that he was soon on the road which led to ———, unmindful of the possibility that its present proprietor might be from home. The country was hilly, and the roads, as Sir Thomas had truly said, very bad; so that, as he had to ride fifteen miles, it was some time before he reached the house, so changed, that while awaiting the appearance of the servant to give him entrance, he could scarcely recognize his own possessions; and while he gazed at the red paint which plastered the stone walls, in imitation of brick, he felt almost glad that the house was so unlike what it had once been.—On inquiring whether Sir Thomas were at home, he was answered in the negative; but was told that Miss Mac Call was, and would be happy to see him.—He hesitated, for he dreaded lest he should be uselessly detained from the purport of his visit; but thinking that he might perhaps gain some intelligence from her respecting her father, he alighted, and followed the fantastically liveried servant to the dining room.

It is strange why vulgar people always prefer introducing their morning visitors to dining rooms rather than to any more commodious or habitable looking apartment. Mr. Hamilton at least thought so as he

entered a chamber seldom if ever gladdened by the light or air of heaven, lest the first should take something from the gaudy coloring of the kaleidoscope carpet,—if that indeed were possible, seeing this was only displayed in the small part uncovered by a green baize,—or lest the latter should convey from its atmosphere, the remaining fragrance of the previous night's *toddy*, or of the small ale on which Sir Thomas found it most healthful to dilute his substantial breakfast. The narrow, uneasy looking chairs, covered with green cotton, and placed in martial array around the walls, looking so little inviting to repose, that Mr. Hamilton ventured to draw up one of the blinds, and throwing open the window, to lean from it, awaiting the entrance of the fair young lady. His patience was considerably tried, for it required some time to take from her hair the paper coverings, which, like those of the chairs, were never removed except on particular occasions; and this was, perhaps, one of the reasons why Miss Mac Call had preferred awaiting the arrival of her Glasgow friends at home, that she might exhibit her curls in better order than she could have done, had she taken the *short* walk of fifteen miles, which her father had proposed, to meet them at the village inn. In truth, the trouble she had given herself since the moment she had seen from her window so handsome a young man dismount from his horse, had not been in vain. Young and pretty, fat and fair, Miss Mac Call was generally esteemed a beauty by those who do not “start where souls is wanting,” nor miss that nameless grace which refinement of mind can alone bestow on outward appearance. She was, however, a good-natured, well-meaning creature; and the tyrannic influence which her father had exercised over her, had tended greatly to subdue the demonstration of her natural petulance to which had succeeded an awkward bashfulness, almost painful to those who addressed her. Mr. Hamilton's polite manner re-

her; and he obtained, after a few questions, a satisfactory reply to his inquiries. He learnt that Sir Thomas was gone to Walrond Castle—that she happened to be aware of Dugald Sinclair's dismissal; not, as far as she knew, for any misconduct; but because one of her father's Glasgow friends, to whom he was partly indebted for having been Provost of Pollockshaws, was anxious for that farm from which Dugald and his mother had been ejected. It was not without sundry petitions, half whispered, that "Mr. Hamilton might not tell papa, that she had made him acquainted with these facts," while, blushing, she stood before him twisting a pair of new yellow gloves around her red chapped fingers, and putting her head suddenly forward to entreat discretion, then as suddenly withdrawing it, as if she had betrayed too much the pleasure she evidently experienced in this tête-à-tête. As soon as Mr. Hamilton could politely rid himself of her repeatedly urged solicitations, "to taste a little wine, or may be, some whiskey, with an infusion of juniper," which she recommended as being "papa's favorite morning dram,"—equally anxious to fulfil the purpose of his expedition, and be once more at Walrond Castle, he returned Miss Mac Call his sincere thanks for her intelligence, and, assuring her that Sir Thomas should remain unacquainted with the source from whence it was derived, he again mounted his horse, and was soon on his way to ——— village, where Dugald and his mother had hired lodgings, awaiting the summons to sail. While the quick step of his horse carried him speedily out of sight, Miss Mac Call again resumed the paper envelopes of her pretty flaxen hair, laid aside the new gloves, and sighed to think how much better looking *poor* Mr. Hamilton was, than the *rich* West India merchant Mr. Simson, who was expected that evening with his aunt and sisters at ———. Eric Hamilton slackened his pace as he came to the brow of a very steep hill which overlooked as fair a scene as eye had ever gazed on.

The long dark line of the sea which terminated the horizon, was relieved by numerous ships and boats spreading their bird-like sails to the gentle gale, and shining white or brightly red beneath the influence of a mid-day sun. Within the bay, on whose borders the little village of ——— stretched irregularly in broken masses of lowly but picturesque buildings, several vessels were preparing for departure, and among them, pre-eminent in size, was the brig which was soon to sail for America. It could scarcely fail to excite a mournful interest in the mind of one formed to sympathise in the joys and sorrows of his fellow mortals, however lowly in station. Those possessed of real feeling, will ever be ready to give credit for it to others; and it is, perhaps, owing to that disposition of mind, that such persons are ever more alive to painful impressions, since sympathies are so much oftener claimed on sorrowful, than on joyous occasions. Perhaps, with a few exceptions, Mr. Hamilton contemplated a wider field of woe before him than the hundreds who were leaving their relations, their friends, and their native soil, for the chances of disappointment, losses, and sorrow, on a foreign shore.

There was an appearance of unusual bustle in the village of ———. Mr. Hamilton could discern the bright coloring of cloaks and plaids in congregated masses on the little quay, from which a number of boats were pushing off. It suddenly occurred to his mind, that the vessel might be on the point of sailing, and putting spurs to his horse, he soon found himself at the entrance of the village. Inquiring where Dugald Sinclair lodged, he was conducted by a little boy through a by lane to one of the meanest hovels in the place; the door, which faced the street, was closed, but he was led almost through a dirty pond, lying stagnant by its tumbling walls, round the gable end of the cottage to another opening to the sea shore, but the entrance to which was at that moment obstruct-

ed by a large wooden *kist* or chest bedaubed with red paint, and fastened by broad stripes of blue flannel. It was for the present secured by the person of an old woman habited in a large cloak, who was sitting upon it chewing tobacco: she arose from her seat at the sight of a young gentleman, and muttered some words in Gaelic, to which the boy who accompanied Mr. Hamilton replied in the same language.

"Och! och?" said she, lifting up her hands with wonder and astonishment—"Och! och! an' is it himsel' wha would gang before himsel! His Honor's glory! Wae's one that your honor wad come to seek her in such an unco' place, and the mustress nae at hame? She's jist gone over the way yonder to bid farewell to Mistress Caimbell afore she goes—an the young mon's in the planting yonder wi' his Mary—poor silly thing, she's grieving her heart out to part wi' him, but it's little wonder, he's a good cratur, and kind too—and it's ill token what *may* become of him in these foreign parts. But och! och! your honor's standing—will you no come in and rest you a wee?"

"If you please," replied Mr. Hamilton, "though I would as soon remain here," added he, as the volumes of smoke gave evidence that the atmosphere within could be anything but agreeable.

"Och! och! dear, come into the fire, and change your feet, dear; tho' wae's me, the gude wife has no a pair of old shoes to put your bonny feet in. All's away, an' they a' be soon away too—wae's me, for times are changed now." It was with some difficulty that Mr. Hamilton could make himself understood, for the degree of learning which old Nanny Mac Ingish possessed in the English language was scarcely adequate to enable her to comprehend the fluent speech of Mr. Hamilton. He, however, by degrees, elicited, by sundry questions, the intelligence that "the Swallow" was to sail that evening for Canada, that poor old Janet Sinclair and Dugald had all in readiness for im-

mediate departure, and were expected every moment to return for the few bundles, which were lying on the wretched pallet, and instantly repair to the vessel, as the captain had given positive orders, that every one should be on board by four o'clock that afternoon.

"It's na," added old Nanny, "that I fear for their well doing in 'Merica, for he is a gude industrious lad, and will work hard wherever he goes. And folks say that you can get your sugar there for naething, jist by gieing a whin taps to the trees; it rins out like rain, and it's just as goode as we can get frae Glasgow; but it's to think of the poor auld silly woman that's scarcely fit to put one foot afore another——". Here she was interrupted by the entrance of the old friend of whom she was speaking; the darkness of the ~~D~~ovel was increased by the tall figure of Janet Sinclair, which, wrapped in a large blue mantle, concealed all but one hand, which was waving up and down in the attitude of lamentation, as she slowly walked into the house, apparently unconscious of the presence of those about her.

Nanny was the first to speak. "Janet," she said, "do you no see the laird?"

Janet lifted her dim but tearless eyes; there was an expression of calm resignation in her old withered countenance, which could not fail to excite the sympathy of those who looked upon it; but as she recognized, in the manly form and expressive face of the young man who stood before her, the person of her late master, whose parents she had known and loved as her benefactors and friends, whom she had fondled on her knee in his infant days, and with whom she had many a time spent moments of pride and happiness to her, a flood of remembrance rushed over her heart, which she had fancied was grown callous, and overflowed from her eyes in warm tears, bringing relief to her; but deeply affecting the feeling heart of Mr. Hamilton. Perhaps one more affectedly sensitive



might have shrunk from the close embrace with which the poor old woman acknowledged the recognition; but Mr. Hamilton would not at that moment have added, for worlds, one pang to the wounds of the poor old honest heart which beat so warmly for him; and taking both her hands, he began to re-assure her—entreated her to compose herself, and listen to what he had to tell her, as he was in hopes he might be a messenger of comfort to them all. Oh, how his heart smote him at that moment, to think that had he spent his days as duty would have enjoined, he might have spared many a sorrow to his poor dependants.

Just as Janet had dropped her thin arms by her side, and was looking up in his face to hear him speak, her son entered. "Mother dear," said he, "haste ye and come away, the captain's down on the quay yonder, calling—the horn is sounding, and we must be gone." Then, as he spied Mr. Hamilton, he doffed his bonnet, and apologised for having spoken so loud: Mr. Hamilton gave him his hand.

"You must not leave us yet, Dugald; I am come to beg of you to give up your intention of going to America, and glad am I that I am not yet too late."

"What does your Honour mean?" said Dugald, stupified with astonishment, so that his mind could not take in the thought.

"I mean," said Mr. Hamilton, "that neither you nor your mother must sail in that ship. I cannot promise you as good a farm as that which you once held, but there is a small one in Glenfinna, which I think, I can grant to you; and in the mean time, here are a few pounds to pay the rent of a lodging, till I can secure for you a more permanent one."

"But, Sir—your Honour, the captain of yon vessel has most of our goods on board: I've paid our passage."

"Never mind all that, Dugald. See, there is one behind that thorn, who will not regret your change of mind," added he, moving to the door, and pointing

to poor Mary, who leant her head on her hand, crying bitterly. At that sight every objection seemed to vanish from Dugald's mind; and taking the proffered hand of Mr. Hamilton, he thanked him with such eloquence as his simple gratitude dictated, while a big tear coursed down his manly cheek; and, as he wiped it with his coat sleeve, he said,—

"Your Honour will no be the worse of an old mother's blessing and prayers; and I'll work for you, or fight for you, with these two hands, as long as I live."

"No thanks—no thanks to me," said Mr. Hamilton, as soon as he could free himself from the grasp of the old women, who crowded about him, kissing his hands, and alternately blessing his bonny face and bonnier heart in Gaelic, or in English, as the power of utterance in the former language failed.

"No thanks—no thanks to me; but know that it is to the young ladies at Walrond Castle that you are indebted for my becoming acquainted with your situation—to them that you owe all."

"Bless their sweet hearts," said the three voices, at once: "but oh!" ejaculated Nanny, "we maun tell the bairn yonder. Mary! Mary!" she screamed to the weeping lassie—"Dugald's no going! his Honour has paid for all!—ye'll be married now—no drawings back—all will be joy—jöy! Come in, dear, and hear it!" She moved not, but Dugald flew to her; and through the white budding blossoms and green boughs of the hawthorn tree, Mr. Hamilton thought he saw his face draw nearer to Mary's, than ceremony would have suggested, to tell the glad tale; but the embrace was soon over, and again Dugald was holding his horse's head. Janet was carrying a chair to its side, that his Honor might mount cannily, and old Nanny was pouring into a broken glass, some of the contents of a whisky bottle, which she had quickly procured from beneath the bed.



Mr. Hamilton did not refuse it, but drinking health and prosperity to the now happy family, waited not to receive more benedictions, but rode quickly through the village, on his return to Walrond Castle. He stayed not to witness the partings of the crowd upon the quay, for his heart was too full to indulge further in the sympathies excited by such a sight; but as the gun fired a parting salute, ere the vessel, whose sails were set, weighed anchor, a throb of joy and honest exultation, mingled with a sincere desire for the welfare of those whose departure his benevolence could not prevent; and now, with a beating heart, he anticipated the reward of his exertions in favor of Dugald, in the smile which his beloved Susan would bestow. She, who entered so feelingly into the wants and wishes of others—she, who he knew had at heart an affectionate regard for him, though he dared not now claim a dearer interest there. Then he thought of Margaret's gratitude—of those kind words she was ever wont, in her simple earnestness, to pour forth, when her tenderness espied a gloom upon his brow; or when, as he thought, she wished to remove the effect of her sister's coldness. He loved *her* as a sister: perhaps more warmly; for there is something in the feeling which a confiding woman's affection imparts to man, more touching, when bestowed by one who claims no kindred, save that of the heart, which is more softening, more endearing, than even the love of a sister. Had Mr. Hamilton known Margaret's secret, he would have ceased so calmly to enjoy the effects of it, for he was too honorable, too high minded, to deceive any woman; far less one, whose peace of mind he so truly valued as hers. The passionate attachment to her sister, which wholly engrossed him, blinded him to all beside, while the fears and doubts which accompanied it, left him also in painful ignorance, that it was as fondly, as devotedly returned. One word would have saved him from misery; but,

while he beheld her, the ornament and grace of her house of luxury and comfort—while he knew himself to be stripped of every worldly advantage,—regarded by her father, though indulgently, still, in the light wherein his own imprudence had placed him, as altogether unworthy to claim the hand of his daughter,—he would not speak that word, although its suppression should break his heart. Besides, while Susan concealed so entirely every corresponding emotion, his pride would have withheld him from suing for an unwilling heart; for such he deemed hers to be. He knew not that the consciousness of a sister's happiness being placed in her possession, added increasing diligence to the care with which Susan guarded her own secret, and set a double watch over the betrayal of those feelings which her delicacy would have blushed to reveal unsought.

## CHAPTER V.

"Dost thou not love, in the season of spring,  
To twine thee a flowery wreath;  
And to see the beautiful birch tree fling  
Its shades on the grass beneath?  
Its glossy leaf, and its silvery stem—  
Oh! dost thou not love to look on them?"

MRS. HEMANS.

THE riding party proceeded from Walrond Castle, apparently in high spirits. It was difficult to decide which of the two beautiful sisters looked the more graceful and picturesque on horseback, with their long flowing habits and velvet caps. Perhaps, the elasticity of Margaret's movements showed to more advantage in that exercise, than the calm dignity of her sister's figure; and her long glossy ringlets, which fell in sunny showers around her face, were perhaps more becoming to that attire than the braiding of her sister's darker locks around her snowy forehead; but to Lord De Tracey, Susan appeared as she ever did—as the loveliest, the most graceful, the most perfectly bewitching of women: and since, in her anxiety to conceal, not only from others, but from herself, the secret of her love for Hamilton, she exerted herself, especially, on that morning, to converse as if her thoughts were not wholly occupied with another; he thought the charms of her mind and conversation far exceeding what he had ever seen before. When Margaret found herself alone with Evelyn, (for so it happened, that thus the party soon became divided,) she could no longer refrain, from the fulness of her heart, and the simplicity of her mind, to dilate on the subject which had so much occupied her that morning. Evelyn listened with unfeigned interest, while the eloquent expression of his companion's countenance, at each moment betraying the native kindness of her pure heart,

sent new pangs to his, though of so pleasing a nature, that he would not have exchanged those moments for the calmest and most undisturbed of a different kind. He afterwards reproached himself, for being so deeply engrossed by the varying beauties of her mind and person, that he scarcely felt as he should have done for the object which had called forth her sympathy. It was not till he knew that another, and that other his most dreaded rival, had won her warmest approbation by anticipating her kind intentions—that he had to contend with emotions foreign to his generous nature. The most noble-hearted little know of what varying elements human nature is composed, till they find the evil painfully realized within their own breasts; nor is it till then, that unfeigned charity can be exercised towards others, since it is only from a thorough appreciation of the power of temptation, and our proneness to yield to it, that we can learn to feel for, and to excuse, those who fall into error. How often did this transient sentiment of envy serve as a beacon to the watchful and circumspect Evelyn! From this subject, Margaret passed on to observe upon the character and manners of Sir Thomas Mac Call. So much benevolence was mingled with her playful exhibition of his outward absurdities, that Evelyn wondered at her forbearance, knowing how ill she could brook to see such a one in the situation which Hamilton had once occupied, and how painful every remembrance of the cause must be to her.

“You are not, perhaps, aware,” said Evelyn, “that I have been entrusted with what would be in another case a very hard task.”

“What is it?” eagerly inquired Margaret, her mind instantly reverting to the possibility of something which might be connected with Hamilton.

“I do not think,” replied Evelyn, with a smile, “that, did you suspect, in the least degree, the pur-

port of my message, you would betray so much eagerness to know it."

"Oh!" said Margaret, "you are aware that curiosity is one of the chief attributes of my sex, and I cannot be entirely exempt from it."

"I might suppose *you*," said Evelyn, in a scarcely audible voice, "to be exempt from most human imperfections;" then, with more confidence, he added, "forgive my rallying you on anything connected with this subject,—it is one so revolting to my feelings, so preposterous, so absurd, that I scarcely know how to name it. Can you imagine that this man has the presumption to aspire to an honor, a happiness, the very prospect of which would inspire the best, the most attractive, with fear greater than" — "my own," he would have added, but Margaret interrupted him.

"And what can this be?" she said, hurriedly, for the unusual energy of Evelyn's manner awakened a suspicion which at that moment, made her forget the transient disgust she had experienced that morning, when Sir Thomas Mac Call had hinted the possibility of his condescending to make her the mistress of his home.

"Can you guess?" said Evelyn. "Impossible! My lips, then, must utter this man's presumptuous hopes. He asked me whether *the old gentleman*, as he dared to call your father, would give you as handsome a dowry as to your elder sister—and bade me to make every inquiry—'since,' he added, 'in that case I shall let the young lady herself very soon into the secret of my favorable intentions towards her; and I give you leave, Mr. Marchmont,' added he, 'to let her know what she may expect.' He presumed to continue his encomiums on your perfections; but I could scarcely bear to listen, nor was it till I heard him this morning dare to insult you by hinting his presumptuous intentions, that I could bring myself to name the subject; I wished to have spared you the disclosure; but since I could not, I hope you will not

be displeased with me for giving you this warning: it has been a greater trial to me than you can be aware of."

"Displeased with you!" said Margaret; "no: I think that were a bad reward for being the bearer of such tidings,"—and she burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter. "But why so solemn, Evelyn? I scarcely knew what to expect, when I saw that grave look succeed to such unusual vehemence. If such an honor awaits me from the accomplished Sir Thomas, I shall have little to apprehend for his heart's sake—and perhaps less for my own. Do you think me sincere?" As she looked smilingly in Evelyn's face, his intense gaze of admiration, softened and subdued her playful manner. He scarcely knew how to reply, for a thrill of joy rushed through his heart, as he thought, for an instant, she had looked upon him for the first time with a bashfulness, which seemed to promise more than the next reflective moment allowed him to dwell upon. "I cannot doubt your sincerity at any time," said he, with assumed composure; "it might serve as a warning to others, less daring than Sir Thomas; but there may be other charms more fatal to the peace of those who would control their unruly hopes, than this sincerity. Would that I had never felt their influence!"

Confused—surprised—almost overwhelmed by the sudden conviction which reached Margaret's mind, at the conclusion of these words, that she was beloved by Evelyn, she scarcely knew what she said; but observing, that if they continued to ride so slowly, they should never reach Gleniffar in time for sketching, she called to her sister to follow her, and put her horse to a pace which precluded further conversation. There was something so estimable in Evelyn's character, so dignified, yet so endearing in his manner, that she felt it impossible to meet the expression of his attachment by assuming the same levity of manner with which she had received the announcement of Sir Thomas's

gracious intentions; but she wondered how it was possible that he should so long have continued an inmate of her father's house, in daily, and almost hourly, intercourse with her, without her having hitherto discovered anything in his manner, which marked the feeling he had now betrayed. Her thoughts reverted instantly to him whom she loved with all the enthusiasm of a first attachment; and though her nature was all kindness and tenderhess, she almost overlooked the pain Evelyn was doomed to suffer from her indifference, in the ingrossing sentiment which bound her undivided heart to another. When again they slackened their pace, Susan and Lord de Tracey rode beside them; for, leaving the road, they proceeded up a steep bank. The path again descending, led them to a green flat on the borders of a sparkling burn, whose banks, enamelled with thyme and daisies, wild anemones, and violets, wafted a mingled perfume through the morning air, and called forth many exclamations of enjoyment and delight from the sisters. Their companions were so deeply engaged with their own meditations, that their minds seemed scarcely at liberty to enter with real pleasure in their admiration of nature's beauties. Susan did not lament the opportunity which brought them together again, for she was wearied of acting a part, and it was much to appear pleased with the compliments which Lord de Tracey contrived artfully to introduce in whatever subject their conversation turned. Accomplished in all the arts of flattery, his compliments seemed to escape him, as if unguardedly led into the utterance of feelings that could not be suppressed. Then, ere the mind had leisure to reflect on their meaning, he contrived to change the subject to one of general interest, on which he descanted with so much address, that Susan could not but admire the eloquence of his language, and the grace of his manner; but notwithstanding all this, there was to her an absence of that nameless

charm, without which, the highest attainments of mind seem to fail in their power to captivate the wayward heart of woman; and pre-occupied as hers already was, she would have preferred the ardent and reckless impetuosity which Hamilton every moment betrayed, to all Lord de Tracey's pleasing wiles, even though prudence and judgment condemned the former. When she had retired that morning from the breakfast room, she had to endure, alone, the workings of her sensitive heart, struggling between the impulses of tenderness and the more imperious call of duty, which bade her relinquish hopes that could only be fostered on the ruins of her beloved sister's happiness. She had seen the energy of Eric's manner, when engaged in conversation with Margaret, that morning; her sentiments towards him were no secrets to Susan, for that open-hearted sister knew not how to hide anything from her. She had remarked their mutual exchange of looks, and the private understanding which seemed to exist between them; she thought of the comparative coldness which Mr. Hamilton always evinced towards herself; and that which one less diffident might have deemed a favorable sign, she had construed into a decided proof of indifference. With this conviction she sought relief by making a firm resolution, that she would never intrude, by word or look, upon the happiness of her more favored sister—on the contrary, that she would use every effort to conciliate her father towards Eric Hamilton, and induce him one day to give his sanction to the accomplishment of their wishes. With this view she had determined to assume a more favorable manner towards those whose addresses were favored by her father. Hard task, indeed, for the young and the enthusiastic to heal the heart's wound by forcing themselves to endure the unwelcome attention of those they do not love. In the midst of poor Susan's bitterness of heart, a ray of sunshine seemed to rest upon her pure mind, as the consciousness of



kind and virtuous endeavors soothed the anguish she had long silently endured, beneath the trial of unrequited love. She could not bear for a moment to think that that joyous being who now gaily rode before her should ever lose the sparkling charm of youthful happiness, which it was her delight to witness and to promote: and she would not have drawn a tear from that eye, even were it to ensure her own happiness. No: Margaret's secret was more than safe when she entrusted it to that generous, self-denying sister; and she knew it well, though she knew not how much that sister endured in the concealment of her own. They rode quickly on; Margaret proposed a short race on the grass, and won it. The exhilaration of exercise brought an additional glow into her cheek, and she looked more brilliantly beautiful than ever. Evelyn almost forgot his woes while gazing on her. The sisters laughed and joked together; their companions joined; and Lord de Tracey appeared to more than usual advantage. Margaret was delighted with him, and thought he could not have been in earnest when he spoke slightly of Hamilton. Surely, thought she, amid the flush of hope and joy, which the smiling aspect of nature tended to excite—surely none who know him can overlook the excellence of his heart, the candour and generosity of his mind; his very faults seem more like virtues than the excellencies of others,—and then, so young—so handsome—so engaging! “Where do you think,” said she, in a low voice, “can Mr. Hamilton have gone so suddenly?” The question was so abruptly made, that Susan turned deadly pale; for, dreaming involuntarily at that moment of the very person named, she felt as if her thoughts had been discovered. But Margaret's eager look of inquiry changed not. “Have you really no suspicion?” said Susan, endeavoring to smile. “Is it possible that you did not anticipate some result from your conversation this morning?—Mr. Hamilton is not

wont to overlook a petition framed by so favored an applicant as yourself. Surely, dearest, you know whither he has gone, and on what errand."

"Is it possible?" replied Margaret; "but now you remind me—oh, dear!" said she, "I do think you are right—bless him, the dear, good, kind-hearted——"

"Miss Falkland!" cried Lord de Tracey, galloping up to them, "you are mistaking your road; you told me that path to the right was the one by which we were to follow to Gleniffar: if so, you have passed it."

"True," replied Susan, turning her horse's head,—and the sisters found themselves once more escorted by their respective lovers; though each had that to think of which rendered their company at that moment far from acceptable.

The scenery now became at every advancing step so striking, that it was impossible for those so much alive to the beauties of creation, and the feelings which they excite, to remain insensible to them. The pathway wound through thick masses of birch and hazel and ash trees, whose stems were entwined with ivy and various colored mosses, while the grass beneath them was enamelled with primroses, violets and other wild flowers, relieved by the tender green of the young fern leaves; here the morning sun had not yet penetrated, the dew still hung in silvery drops on every pencilled stem, and, at intervals, where the trees and underwood were less thickly congregated, spots of verdure seemed to invite the traveller to repose. There the eye might gaze untired on the distant scene, which stretched beyond the wood: rocky hills, covered with sheep or cattle, and here and there the picturesque forms of a herd watching them, or a shepherd's dog, whose bark sounded from afar, as a friendly cheering voice. At intervals, on the brow of the hills, a number of scattered huts lent animation and life to the wild scene; the wide expanse of azure sea beyond, mingling with the cloudless sky, or only broken by

the distant sail, terminated the vista, which the party frequently stopped to gaze at, while the sisters sometimes made a hasty sketch; but the horses would not patiently await such an employment, and they therefore proceeded as speedily as the difficulties of mountain roads would admit. They were now approaching the ruins of the old castle, which stood on an eminence, beneath whose rocky banks the burn widened, and over which several ash trees bent their graceful foliage, relieving the dark grey of the ruined building. The scene was eminently characteristic of the Scotch highlands, and well calculated for the pencil; and Susan, whose talent for that delightful art far surpassed that of most amateurs, and even of some artists, executed an exquisitely tasteful and feeling view, which called forth the unfeigned praises of her companions. Margaret was also engaged in the same undertaking; but Evelyn stationed himself by her, mended her pencils, and handed them to her; spoke so gently, so agreeably, without once reverting to the subject which had alarmed her in the morning, that she forgot the unpleasant sensations which they had caused. Her spirits rose to their usual lively tone, and tired of her sedentary occupation, she flung her sketch to the winds, and flew as lightly as they, up the banks, and into the deserted chambers of the castle, stopping only to gather some wild flowers, and weave them round her hat, or to search for agates, which were often gathered there by the peasant children. Evelyn failed not to possess himself of the neglected sketch; but, disdaining to intrude where he feared himself unwelcome, he seated himself by Susan and Lord de Tracey; at which arrangement, the former felt relieved, and the latter not particularly grateful.

The day wore on, and, after partaking of some refreshment at a neighboring cottage, Susan proposed returning homeward. "Oh, not so soon! surely not yet," exclaimed Lord de Tracy and Evelyn, at once: but Susan was determined.

"My father," said she, "promised to meet us on our return, and I would not, for any pleasure, be the occasion of keeping him out after the sun has set."

"Then the day has not been altogether unpleasant to Miss Falkland," said Lord de Tracey, in his most winning tone.

"Surely," said Susan, "no one can behold such a scene as this——"

"In such society," interrupted Lord de Tracey——

"Without," continued Susan, (as if unobserving his parenthesis,) "without enjoyment. I have been often here, but it always strikes me with some new beauty, for I see it under different aspects; and, as I pretend to be an artist, I am ever susceptible of new feelings for the same objects."

"And I," said Lord de Tracey, "see it for the first time; but it will ever appear to me under one aspect. The sunshine which your presence has imparted, is far brighter than that of this May-day, beautiful though it be. Memory will be *my* artist, and well does she know to fix her coloring on this heart, where one so lovely is enshrined." As he spoke, he led Susan to her horse, and ventured slightly to press her hand, as he assisted her to mount. Susan was silent, for she was grieved. No answering throb warmed her heart—no returning glance from her dark yet soft eye met the ardent gaze of her lover. She thanked him for his assistance, and gently drawing the reins into her hand, moved forward.

Evelyn awaited Margaret's command, and stood by her horse's head, to lend the same joyfully proffered aid to her: she was stooping to fasten her shoe; but, ere he had time to assist her mounting, she sprang forward, and was on her horse in a moment.

"You see," said she, "how independent I am!"

Evelyn looked reproachfully at her. "Happy they," said he, "who can truly say they are independent—perhaps not quite so happy they who make

others slaves. Surely, Miss Margaret is not one of those who would rejoice in the enthrallment of the unhappy"—

"No, Evelyn," said Margaret, with unwonted gravity; "no: that, indeed, is not in my nature."

It was long since Margaret had called him by his name: the habit which she had acquired in the intimacy of childhood had since been dropped for the more formal appellation, which advance of years and change of circumstances seemed to call for; but the fact of her doing so, at that moment, filled his heart with joy, and after a moment's silence, he exclaimed—

"Oh Margaret! dear Margaret! would that we could recal the days of our childhood, when all seemed bright and smiling before us; when you loved me—did you not?—as a brother; when there was no other companion in your walks and rides; when I assisted you to mount your pony, or to cross the burn, or to deck that hair with the flowers we had gathered together. Oh Margaret! would that I could recal those days forever gone!"

"Yes, Evelyn," rejoined Margaret, gravely, "they are indeed gone—and for ever. The years which intervened during your absence abroad, estranged us, in a manner, from that degree of intimacy, which it would not be suitable, now our childhood is passed, to resume. Let us be friends,—kind, warm friends,—that will not quarrel, even," concluded she, smiling, "even though, in the wildness of my spirits, I prefer mounting my horse without assistance." She reached her hand to Evelyn as she began; but, though she had thus playfully terminated the conversation, she feared, by the nervous pressure with which he grasped it, that poor Evelyn's ardor of feeling was by no means so easily repressed; and it was with difficulty that she contrived, during the remainder of their ride, to render the conversation general, and avoid such topics as might lead to the expression of sentiments which she

had unwittingly awakened, and which she thought herself incapable of returning.

"Hark!" said Susan, as they drew within a few miles of the Castle. "Hark! what is that gun?—the report is so loud, I should almost think it was that of a cannon."

"It is so in truth," replied Lord de Tracey: "and set, there is the smoke!—it proceeds from that large brig."

"From what?" eagerly inquired Margaret; "from the brig? Oh! see, her sails are set—she is about to leave the shore.—Oh! poor Dugald!—poor, poor Mary! It is then too late!" The thought struck her that she had been remiss in her exertions in their behalf, that an early application to her father might have saved these poor people from the misery that awaited them. The idea was so painful that she in vain strove to repress the tears that rose to her eyes. Susan observed her emotion, and, guessing the cause, was at her side in a moment, whispering words of consolation and encouragement. Evelyn, while he felt as much for her, dared not offer the kindness even of a brother.

As they quickened their pace, the hopes which Susan had suggested lent new strength to her sister; and just as they reached the entrance to the Castle inclosure, a horseman galloping at full speed met them. It was Eric Hamilton, and quickly did the sisters recognize him, all bright and beautiful, as he seemed; his glossy curls escaping from beneath the Highland bonnet he wore—his face flushed with a glow of health, and beaming with smiles, as he welcomed them.

"What news?" said Margaret eagerly.

"Good news! good news!" replied he: "good news to Miss Margaret! Dugald will not go abroad; and Mary will not, I think, make any objections to the new arrangements—for which they have to thank you."

"Oh! thank you, thank you!" said Margaret, stretching out her hand to him in simple undisguised

pleasure. A tear stole down the cheek of Susan, but it was unobserved.—Hamilton's countenance fell. "One word from her," thought he, "would have amply repaid me; but that word is withheld." He glanced at Lord de Tracey, and a pang of jealousy shot through his frame. They reached the Castle gate, and Margaret did not this time disdain assistance to dismount; she was soon on the steps which led to her father's room, and told him her tale of joy as correctly as haste and happiness would admit.

Susan had remained some paces behind her; and, in endeavoring to jump from her saddle, her habit became entangled; and, notwithstanding Lord de Tracey's assistance, she was on the point of falling forwards, when Mr. Hamilton sprang towards her and caught her in his arms. It was a moment of deep emotion to both,—but each heart beat secretly. Susan was confused.

"Thank you," said she, hastily; "two good deeds in one day are more than most can boast of performing." Eric's countenance beamed with joy.

"A thousand were too well repaid by Miss Falkland's approval;"—but Susan heard him not: overwhelmed with the dread of giving way to her own weakness, and acting treacherously towards her sister, she felt at that moment unequal even to meet her father, and rushed to her own apartment, where, burying her face in her hands, she thought of all that had passed that day, and once more resolved to conquer her ill-fated attachment.

## CHAPTER VI.

"The more a man values himself, the less he is valued by others; and it is a thousand to one that his foolish vain humour of pride mingles some odd, fanciful, ridiculous, or unsavory ingredient in the actions or deportment of such men."

SIR MATTHEW HALE.

How long Susan remained in silent meditation she knew not; but she was first aroused from it by her sister, who entered hurriedly, having almost completed her toilette for dinner. "Susan! Susan! where are you? Make haste, dear Susan, or you will be too late for dinner. But I fear, love, you are very tired; or my foolish anxiety has annoyed you," said she, kissing her cheek kindly, "for your eyes look very heavy, and I know you feel anything that has vexed me long after I have forgotten it. Cheer up, love, and make yourself very smart, I entreat; you do not know why I ask it. Mr. Elliott, and his friend Mr. Richardson, have arrived, and old Mr. Lazenby, with his niece, Mrs. Stewart, also. Papa had quite forgotten to tell us that he expected them to-day. They had written to apprise him of their intention to favour us with a week's visit, and he laid the letter aside, and forgot all about it; so ever since Sir Thomas's departure, poor papa has had the benefit of their society all to himself. Mr. Lazenby has brought him on to his twenty-fourth chapter on pigs, and Mrs. Stewart has given him the entire history of her four sons, beginning at their birth, and carried forwards through the whole progress they have made, physically and mentally, ever since. My father seems to be quite worn out; and no wonder. I must go to his relief; and pray, dear, follow me as soon as possible." So saying, she hastened to complete her toilette, and Susan,



commencing hers, was soon ready to join the party in the drawing-room.

As she laid her hand on the door, it was arrested by Mr. Elliott's, who was about to enter at the same moment.

"If I do not mistake, Miss Falkland," said he, fixing his large grey eyes upon her, and the next moment, glancing at his own figure, which, he flattered himself, was that evening adorned with no ordinary degree of elegance. "How charmed I am to see you! How have you been these hundred years? Let me see—where did we last meet? Oh, yes,—at that horrid woman's, the Duchess of ——. Such *ennui*! not a soul there but oneself! What a delight, to see you once more comfortably!"

Mr. Elliott still held the hand of Susan during this tirade, and impeded the possibility of her progress farther, till she was obliged gently to hint that she had not yet made her curtsy to Mrs. Stewart. "How well your sister is looking!" said he, advancing his left arm to the door, which he threw open, and entered, still speaking close to the ear of Susan, as if on the most confidential footing. Not that he was in love with her, but he liked the *éclat* of appearing to be on an intimate footing with so distinguished a person. Lord de Tracey was standing near the door, and soon arrested his progress by calling out—"Elliott! is that really your high mightiness? I fancied you treading the classic shores of Greece, and waking the echoes of the Parthenon; instead of that, I hear your dulcet tones in these northern regions! How can you breathe in this frigid zone, and at this inclement season?"

Susan heard something, in reply, of July and August being the only bearable months in this climate; but she hastened to her father, who was reclining in his arm chair by the fire, amusing Margaret with an account of his conversation with Sir Thomas Mac Call. The rest of the party, except Mrs. Stewart, had gath-

ered in a cluster in the next room—she had not yet appeared.

“Well, Susan, my fairy queen, how are you?” said the General, kissing her forehead, as she leant forward to inquire how he had spent the day in their absence.

“I am a little tired, *entre nous* soit il dit, of my company, and I fear you are fatigued love with your long ride.”

Ere Susan had assured him that she was quite well, the door opened, and Mrs. Stewart’s double-soled leather shoes gave notice of her approach. She was dressed, or rather incased, in a very tight, scanty, dark brown silk gown, without attempt at ornament of any kind. Her features were regular, though hard, and her clear brown skin, without a semblance of color, would have appeared to somewhat better advantage, had it been shaded round her face by some curls, and her thin bony neck veiled by some lace or trimming: but she appeared to prefer simplicity in each department of her toilette, for her coarse black hair was closely cut around her forehead and neck, and scarcely appeared on her high brow: she would have been truly ugly, had not the regularity of her features in some measure redeemed the absence of taste which her general appearance conveyed. In a gruff low voice she hastily saluted Susan. “How do you do, my dear—my dear? I find you did not expect us: but I hope we shan’t be too much for you.”

She was really fond of the General and his daughters, and it would have been necessary for those who observed her manners, to be acquainted with this fact, as she generally spoke as if greatly out of humor.

Mr. Richardson next advanced—an odd looking little Irishman, with a large nose and prominent eyes, a bald head, and very red hands, which were peculiarly conspicuous from the fact of his wearing his sleeves always half-way up his arm. He shook hands with Susan till the roughness of his grasp made the blood

mantle in her pale cheek, and continued to rattle on upon the exquisite pleasure of seeing old friends, totally regardless whether he received an answer or not; in fact Susan found she had enough to do to act the part of listener to Mrs. Stewart's account of her second boy's proficiency in the Greek language—of Willy's taste for trigonometry, and Alexander's love for Algebra; then she gave a long and melancholy history of her eldest son's late sickness, and how often the tumour in his side had been lanced, till poor Susan began to feel not a little uncomfortable, and was greatly relieved by the announcement of dinner.

Lord de Tracey advanced to claim the arm of Susan, and whispered, that he could have wished her a better incentive to appetite than Mrs. Stewart's description. Margaret gave her arm to Mr. Lazenby, and a meaning smile to Mr. Hamilton as they passed him—as much as to say, “You see what I am doomed to!” Mr. Elliott was fain to proceed alone, and was suddenly attacked with a bad cough, as if to convince his friend Mr. Richardson that but for that accident it would have been his right to walk before Mr. Lazenby; in fact, his mind was somewhat divided whether to rejoice at the presence of Lord de Tracey, or not. He wished to show Richardson on what an intimate footing he was with him, but disliked the thought of there being one superior to himself in such a retired spot as Walrond.

Eric Hamilton was in high spirits, for he was next to Susan. Evelyn was on her other side, but silent and dejected. He could not forbear musing on the complete extinction to his dearest hopes, which he had read that morning in Margaret's words and looks. They had been kind indeed, but her self-possession had resolved all his previous fears into a despairing certainty.

“Pray,” said Mr. Elliott, arousing him from his reserve, “pray, Mr. Marchmont, will you be so obliging

as to change places with me? I am positively frozen here; and perhaps you will not feel the want of the fire so much as I do."

"Certainly," replied Evelyn, rising; "I did not observe that you were suffering so much."

"No," resumed Elliott, rubbing his hands, and winking his red eyes, "no one knows the extent of what I endure in this dreadful climate."

Margaret felt disgusted by the selfishness which seemed to actuate every movement of her new companion, and regretted the change. She well knew that Mr. Elliott's wish to change his place was not for the reason assigned; but that he might be placed by one of the ladies, since on them he could better play off the artillery of his fascinations; besides which, he wished that his friend Richardson should witness the success he enjoyed with the ladies. He was, however, in this instance, considerably disappointed; for Mr. Lazenby engrossed so much of Margaret's attention, that he could scarcely obtain one look or word of reply to the sublime ejaculations which he uttered from time to time, to display his superiority over the rest of the company: such as "monstrous bore!—egregious fool!—c'est trop fort!—cospetto di Bacco!" &c. &c.

These were chiefly elicited by the eloquence of old Mr. Lazenby, who was that day in his glory, finding Margaret a most patient listener.

"Pray, Miss Margaret," the latter began, while his soup still remained untouched before him, and the rest of the company had entered on the first course, "pray, have you not seen the last number of my Berkshire Zoologia? Amazing! I thought the General had received it a week ago; it contains the concluding part of my twenty-third chapter, and the opening of the twenty-fourth—perhaps the fullest and the most detailed, in that highly interesting work. General," continued he, in a louder tone, "did my servant neglect to send you my last number? I was more liberal to

you, than to any of my friends—twenty copies, General, hot-pressed, gilt edges,—eh!”

“I am ashamed not having sooner thanked you for them,” replied the General, “and the engravings are very beautifully executed.”

“Very beautiful,” resumed Mr. Lazenby, and again turned to Margaret. “Amazing! I inspected the designs myself, corrected the first impressions with my own hand. The artist was astonished. Amazing! He did not know my talent for drawing: but I have an amazingly accurate eye. You are, perhaps, not aware how exactly I can distinguish the smallest mistake in the shading—the least defect in the representation of color which can be described, you know, without the aid of a pallet. I was the first person who made that important discovery, and have circulated the hint among several of my artist friends. You are aware, Miss Margaret, that I am a great patron of the arts; and if you please, I will, to-morrow, point out to you the defects I observed in your sister’s view of Glenfinna Castle.”

“Thank you, Mr. Lazenby,” said Margaret, glad that the conversation should turn from the pig-sty; but she was not long delivered from it.

“You must read my twenty-fourth chapter. I make all my young men read my twenty-fourth chapter. It does not, perhaps, give so general a view of the state of this interesting animal in this country, as connected with foreign breeds, but it enters more into detail of that particular breed so much esteemed by all connoisseurs, and by none more than by myself. Amazing! the Duke and Duchess of M—— travelled upwards of three hundred miles last year to inspect my pig-gery; but I scarcely know what they will think when they renew their visit, which I expect they will do this autumn. There is not a gentleman in Great Britain can boast of such a collection—amazing!”

Margaret looked up, and her eyes met those of Eric Hamilton. He was laughing immoderately, which he

vainly attempted to conceal; but the endeavor was useless, for Mr. Lazenby was much too deeply engrossed by the satisfaction he enjoyed, by the consciousness of his superior talent, to perceive any difference of opinion in the countenance of others. But, thinking he discovered an expression of inquiry in Hamilton's smile, he whispered to Margaret in a confidential tone. "Do you think, my dear, that Mr. Hamilton would like a copy of my work? It is a pity, poor young man, that he has not at present any fixed residence for the cultivation of such tastes, but perhaps he might like to show his friends that he is in the possession of so beautiful a work: it will be completed next year, and I then shall present it to His Majesty—thirty-six chapters will, I think, comprise all that can be said; and I flatter myself few could say it better. Amazing!"

"Amazing fool!" groaned Mr. Elliott, adjusting his diamond studs, and casting a look of withering contempt on the speaker.

"My next work," resumed Mr. Lazenby—"my next work, Miss Margaret, shall be a practical treatise on my favorite theory—you have doubtless heard of it?"

"Yes—no—I beg pardon," said Margaret, those thoughts had wandered far away from pigs and theories from the moment Eric Hamilton's name was mentioned.

"Amazing! have I never told you my theory, my dear Miss Margaret? I must have been dreaming. It is simply this:—but the subject will stand much enlarging, and will admit of many interesting anecdotes to illuminate the truth of it. My theory is this—the result of repeated experience:—talent, my dear Miss—talent is invariably derived from the mother ——— temper—temperament, and personal appearance, from the father. Do you not agree—is it not so?—or have you failed to observe it? Youth, my dear lady, is often

unobservant; but the fact is undeniable. By the by—I forget—did you ever see *my* father?" Margaret could scarcely repress a smile, for Mr. Lazenby himself was past seventy. She however replied, as gravely as she could, in the negative.

"Ah! very true. Amazing! you never saw him—no; but," continued he, lifting his hands and eyes with most absurd energy of manner, and totally regardless of his untasted plate, which the servant at that moment removed, "what a face—what a figure! the face of an Adonis—the countenance of an Apollo—the stature and muscular strength of a Hercules!"

"What a degenerate son!" grumbled Mr. Elliot, glancing contemptuously at the diminutive figure of Mr. Lazenby, who, with his thickly powdered head, uplifted shoulders, and absurd expression of self-conceit, appeared at that moment, not unlike a French hairdresser, of the ancient régime.

"My mother—she was long in her grave before my father: the sword soon wore out the scabbard. She was not, indeed, eminent for her beauty; but for talent—for superiority of intellect—for correctness of judgment—for flights of fancy—amazing! she was, indeed, a *rara avis*——'We ne'er shall look upon her like again!'"

"Miss Margaret!" exclaimed Mr. Richardson, in a broad Irish accent,—"I'll drink wine with you!"—Margaret bowed.

"I have endeavored to instruct my unsophisticated friend, and cure him of his hyperborean habits," said Elliott, in a condescending tone, which it was impossible for others to overhear; though the voice sounded sufficiently loud to attract curiosity, which the speaker intended;—"but all in vain; so I have given it up as a hopeless task; and there is something amusing in his total ignorance of the common rules of society."

"What's that you're saying, Elliott? I dare say some comment on our wild Irish manners; but I don't

care—the heart of an Irishman, Miss, is where it should be. Command me in any way, and 'pon my word you will find me your willing servant.”

“I wish, then, very much, to hear some entertaining anecdotes of your peasantry, and you must have a rich store of them,” said Margaret, glad of an opportunity to turn the conversation from the egotism of her two companions.

Richardson needed but a hint, and, spite of the distance at which they were placed, and the necessity of speaking in no gentle tones, he continued to ply Margaret's ear with Limerick fairs—feeling for heads—shillelaghs, &c., till she began once more, to sigh for the conclusion of dinner, which would release her from bestowing her attention on what became so tiresome, and would hasten the moment when Eric Hamilton might again be near her.

Evelyn and Mr. Mac Farlane, the chaplain, had become apparently deeply engaged in conversation, unheard by the rest of the company, and the General was compelled to listen to Mrs. Stewart's interminable discussions. In fact, he and his daughter Margaret were the victims of the evening; the rest of the party were all happy in their different ways. Mr. Lazenby had obtained a good listener—Mr. Elliott the place, which, next to being near Susan, he most coveted. Mr. Richardson was delighted, for he was seldom, if ever, otherwise; and this evening, which admitted him in such society, appeared one of especial enjoyment. Lord de Tracey flattered himself that he was gaining ground in the good graces of Susan; and Eric Hamilton and she were silently and secretly satisfied with being near to one another, hearing one another's voices, and experiencing that thrill of nameless joy, which those only can estimate, who have loved as long, as truly, and as purely as they loved, and loved in secret. Poor Susan's joy was, indeed, embittered by the remembrance, that she must



## FAMILY RECORDS.

relinquish it to another, and that other her beloved sister. Could she rob her of such happiness?

Eric Hamilton's enjoyment was, indeed, impaired by the dread that his affection might never be returned; but that evening, flushed by the consciousness of having merited and received her approbation,—elated by the irrepressible kindness of her manner,—impassioned by the superiority of her loveliness,—he felt, at that moment, as if it would be treason to interrupt his felicity by one distrusting or anxious thought of the future.

When the gentlemen appeared in the drawing-room, they found Mrs. Stewart endeavoring to listen to strains, which would have summoned them sooner, could the voice whose sweet tones saluted their ears, have reached the dining-room.—Margaret was singing, and accompanying herself on the harp. There is something in the tones of that instrument peculiarly inspiring when touched by a feeling hand, and accompanied with that most affecting of all instruments, a female voice; the high notes of Margaret's were at that moment enriched by the deep and mellow tones of her sister; they seemed to be the irrepressible expression which escaped as it were from the fulness of her heart. The gentlemen, by one consent, paused at the door, fearful to lose a note of such exquisite harmony. The General was the first to speak.

"Well sung, my bonny birds! There are more in the grove than you know of; so now, I fear, we shall lose the best song, except you can engage another songster with a stronger note," added he, taking Lord de Tracey by the hand, and leading him up to Susan, with his usual simplicity—"Susan, my queen, ask Lord de Tracey to join you. I am certain he *can* sing, for I overheard him the other morning, when he thought no one was by."

Lord de Tracey assured the ladies of his inability to comply with their request; but in obedience to

General Falkland's desire, the sisters again sung a duo; the company was unfeignedly delighted. Mr. Lazenby advanced.

"Pardon me, my dear young ladies, but I must criticise that last cadence. It was well executed, but too loud—too loud, I say, not by the voices, but by the instrument. I was at Lady F——'s concert, a short time ago; B—— and T—— were singing the favorite duo, "*Deh senti ah pieta.*" The rest of the company had failed to observe that the accompaniment was too loud, when I took occasion, after the clapping of hands had ceased, to remark it: at once every musician agreed with me; they sang it again, and kept the low pedal down; the effect was amazing—applause was re-doubled—and the duo encored. Will you, my dear ladies, try the experiment?" General Falkland rang for coffee during this tirade.

Mrs. Stewart whispered, in a low growling voice, that her uncle's judgment on every subject was astonishing.

Mr. Lazenby put his motion to the vote, as the ladies were fearful of an encore, and wondered not that it was carried by acclamation. The duo was repeated; and every one, except Mr. Elliott, agreed to make the vain old man happy, by assuring him that if possible, it was more perfect when sung according to his directions. Mr. Elliott retired in disgust, and seated himself in an arm chair, with a book, which, though turned up-side-down, seemed completely to engross his attention; till a famous shooting match was mentioned by Lord de Tracey, when he could no longer forbear, but, rising suddenly, declared by how many brace he had beat the Duke of —, while Richardson stared, and Mr. Lazenby exclaimed, "Amazing!"

In the meantime Evelyn had contrived to interest Margaret in showing her some views of Greece, which Mr. Elliott had brought with him, and Eric

Hamilton lingered by Susan, while she sang alternately Scotch and Irish ballads. He could not utter his delight, but Mr. Richardson, who had no reason for silence, continued his notes of approbation; not so melodiously, but far more loudly, than those by which he was enchanted.

General Falkland alternately conversed with Mr. Mac Farlane and Mr. Lazenby, and Mrs. Stewart was deeply engaged on a new work on education, so that she was unwillingly interrupted by Susan, when, at the usual hour for retiring, she advanced to inquire whether she felt prepared for the hour of rest?

"May I ask one moment's conversation to-morrow morning?" said Eric Hamilton, in a low voice to Margaret.

The blood rushed to her cheeks, and her heart beat to suffocation.

"When—where did you say?" said she, with ill-concealed embarrassment.

Mrs. Stewart perceived that her company was not wanted; and she began a long exhortation to Susan, on the necessity of holding her handkerchief to her mouth, when she went out into the hall, after singing in that warm room.

"In the conservatory, if you please, before the morning service," said Eric, smiling; for he was most anxious to banish from her mind any feeling of awkwardness which might arise from his proposition. "Shall Susan accompany me?" she asked. Eric looked disconcerted. "I fear," he replied, "your sister will scarcely feel sufficiently interested in what I have to say, to give herself that trouble; nor should I venture so far to bore you, as Elliott would say, but that you have shown me that unworthy instruments may be employed to effect your generous purposes."

"But I must bid you good night," said Margaret, "for, see, Susan is going." So saying, she scarcely stopped to touch his hand: but, with a light heart, full

of hope and joy, kissed her sister, bade good night to Mrs. Stewart, and in her happy dreams, saw Eric Hamilton beside her, with Dugald and Mary in their bridal attire, receiving the nuptial benediction.

The slumber of Susan was less profound, her dreams less happy; for in the last interview between Eric Hamilton and her sister, which she had not dared to do more than glance at, but which her imagination pictured in too bright a coloring for her heart's happiness, she had guessed enough to distrust those waking dreams of joy which her sense of duty and affection had not been sufficient that day totally to repress.

## CHAPTER VII.

"O Delia, win my thoughts to thine;  
That half the color of thy life is mine;  
Yet, conscious of the dangerous charm,  
Soon would I turn my steps away;  
Nor oft provoke the lovely harm,  
Nor lull my reason's watchful way."

AKENSIDE.

It was nearly an hour before the usual time for meeting in the chapel, that Margaret was seen, from the garden which fronted the conservatory, by the early Mrs. Stewart, who was taking her constitutional walk, with no other companion than a Greek Lexicon, which she was diligently studying for the sake of her dear Willie. She, however, closed the book, when she perceived Margaret, and, intercepting her with a friendly, but most unwelcome grasp, invited her to take a healthful ramble before breakfast. Margaret pleaded the slowness of her shoes, and the absence of a bonnet.

"Very true, my dear—very true," said she, quieting at once all Margaret's fears; "it would be quite imprudent in you to venture out so thinly clad. That comes of the useless clothing young people wear now-a-days. Look, my dear, at these boots; they last me from morning till night—I never need to change them. And remark my stockings:" so saying, with masculine energy she drew up the border of her brown duffle pelisse, or rather riding coat, and displayed a thick muscular leg incased in a coarse blue worsted stocking, over which she had drawn a pair of double-soled India-rubber boots, further secured by brown garters, to correspond with the dress above. Her closely clipped hair was covered with a brown duffle cap encircled by a border of fur, which she had so effectually pulled on as almost to reach the bridge of her nose,

and only partially disclosed one eyelid, so that her black sparkling eyes produced a very droll effect. The contrast her figure made with the light airy form of the lovely girl who stood beside her, with long glossy ringlets playing over a neck, as white as ivory, was not lost on Evelyn, who from the window of his dressing-room beheld them; nor could he refrain from entertaining a painful anxiety, as he saw the retreating figure of his beloved Margaret return to the conservatory; while Mrs. Stewart again re-opened her Lexicon; and pursued her constitutional walk through the garden. When Margaret entered the appointed spot for her meeting with Eric Hamilton, she had not long to wait in suspense, ere he appeared, thanking her for her kindness, and, with a bright eye and gay smile, proceeded to enquire after her sister's health.

"I hope," continued he, "you will forgive my troubling you so far as to ask you to interest yourself yet more in our poor friends, since it is through your kindness that they have already been saved so much sorrow; but I wish to write to-day to my agent, to make some necessary arrangements, previous to Dugald's taking the farm I promised them, and you can assist me, by giving me some additional information concerning him and his family. Oh! my dear Miss Margaret," added he, taking her hand affectionately, "would that I had spent my life otherwise than I have done! I should not be reduced to this state of wretchedness, — a bitterness of heart which I feel I have deserved!"

Could vanity be attributed to the conscious girl, who, as she beheld before her the object of her heart's best affection, with moistened eye and trembling hand, which, in the fulness of his emotion for another, he convulsively grasped, felt, in the throbbings of her own bosom, a secret pleasure, mixed with affectionate sympathy?

In the sorrow he betrayed, she fancied all that was most gratifying to her secret hopes, and these lamen-

talks for misspent time and fortune, seemed the promptings of a heart that longed to devote itself to her. Could she be blamed by the most severe for warmly returning the pressure of his hand, and wishing, by her tenderness, to soothe his every sorrow, avert future evil, and, by her example and self-denial, wean him from every evil habit?

And was Eric Hamilton *wilfully* blind in reading nothing in her sympathy beyond the expression of a sister's kindness? His heart was too fully pre-occupied with one object, to discern what would have been apparent to an indifferent spectator; and when their conversation ended, and he had obtained from her the information and advice which he sought, he felt no self-reproach at heedlessly endangering her peace of mind;—he saw no bashfulness in her manner, as she gave him the sprig of myrtle from her bosom, nor had he any wish to deceive her, by placing it in his own.

It requires but a trifling object to distract the peace of an anxious mind; and poor Evelyn, who recognized the sprig he had seen Margaret gather while walking with Mrs. Stewart, well knew whose hand had bestowed it on his rival,—and once more he resolved to strive to overcome the hopeless passion which consumed him.

The breakfast party seemed as if no anxiety preyed upon them: the necessity which all felt of concealing their secret doubts and fears, induced them to exert themselves more than usual, to talk upon indifferent subjects; and so successful was the attempt, that, even Mr. Lazenby's eloquence, and Mr. Elliott's egotism, were absorbed in general conversation. The day became wet and cold, and the ladies could not venture out. In compliance with the entreaties of some of the gentlemen, that they might examine Miss Falkland's portfolio, most of the party repaired, after breakfast, to the sitting room, where Lord de Tracey contrived so successfully to draw out his friend Elliott, that all

were equally astonished and delighted at his powers of pleasing.

He had a peculiarly happy manner of relating anecdotes and describing scenes which he had visited ; and while he knew that those who listened to him must acknowledge his superiority, and that he needed not at every moment to convince them of it, his conversation proved equally instructive and amusing.

Lord de Tracey, seated by Susan, and looking over the drawing in which she was engaged, knew not the hours were passing, since each flew by unheeded in the enjoyment of the present. Eric Hamilton was less satisfied ; for, though he sat apart writing letters, his eye continually turned from his employment to gaze on Susan, whose proximity to her lover was by no means pleasing to him. Margaret was at work, and Evelyn reading, or attempting to read, by her. Mr. Richardson and Mrs. Stewart braved the rain, and were taking a friendly walk beneath their umbrella,—each agreeing, that exercise, with an agreeable companion, was the most pleasant thing in the world. General Falkland was engaged in his own room, with Mr. Mac Farlane.

As they all assembled for luncheon, the arrival of the post served for a time to arrest the conversation of those who received packets of letters and newspapers, which were soon spread over the table, the arrival of the post in the country is an event of importance to all.

Susan received no letters, and Mr. Elliott was evidently much disconcerted, on opening the only one put into his hand, to see at the head of it a large print of a cocked hat and the king's arms, which betrayed the nature of its contents to be a call on his purse. He quickly folded, and endeavored to conceal it, as if it had been of some importance. "No news," said he to Miss Falkland, "nothing going on in the political world,—stagnant and dull as ditch-water. Very



strange," continued he, rising, and going towards the window, as if he still expected that, in which he had been disappointed. "Very strange, that I should have no letters from ——"

"I trust none of your family are ill," said Susan.

"Oh no," resumed Mr. Elliott, returning towards her, having elicited the question which he wished, "Oh no, not at all; but I expected to hear from Lady F——; my particular friend: surely the letters must have miscarried—deuced irregular, these Highland posts are. By the by, Miss Falkland, I think you are not acquainted with Lady F——; sad pity—she would do even you a monstrous deal of good—pro-digious fine woman!"

"I am not sure," replied Susan, "that I am very ambitious of her particular acquaintance, notwithstanding your encomiums."

"And wherefore?" inquired Mr. Elliott, "ah! that is just the prejudice acquired by living so much in the country. Forgive me, my dear Miss Falkland; but you have shown a decidedly biassed mind, by the expression of that opinion. I must endeavor to remove it; though I must confess, that I was somewhat disposed to think as you do. Thank Heavens! I am now undeceived, and have been indebted for some of the pleasantest moments in my life to my intimate acquaintance with this highly gifted woman."

Susan scarcely heard this concluding sentence, for her eyes followed her valued friend Evelyn, who, after perusing a letter, hastily left the room, in evident emotion. Mr. Elliott did not see him; he was at that moment entirely engrossed with, what was to him, a far more interesting object—self.

"I must tell you, my dear Miss Falkland, how I first really discovered the worth of Lady F——. I knew her husband very well, and had often met her in the gay world, in which she is, as you know, one of the most *recherché*, the most admired, the most en-

vied, and consequently the most calumniated; but I then merely thought of her as of other women of fashion, who might have no mind which could sympathise with *mine*. It happened, however, that not having quite as much to do as usual, I thought I would give a day or two to Lord F——, whose moors are particularly good. It was late when I reached their château, for I never think of starting till the sun has warmed our chilly atmosphere for some hours; and that day, I travelled so late that it became cold again. The house was quite full of all sorts of people—ragamuffins and tigers withal—such as one cannot keep clear of in this country. The party were at dinner, before I had made my toilette; but a vacant place was left for me, by Lady F——. She eyed me from head to foot, as much as to say, “Are you like the rest of these savages?” and I seized that opportunity to express a hope, that dinner had not been delayed on my account: she smiled contemptuously, and I thought her as prodigious a bore as I had expected. So I turned to my next companion, who was a native—a simple country girl, delighted to be noticed; and who amused me with her unsophisticated astonishment, at all I looked, and all I said. I believe the poor girl flattered herself, by the time the desert came, that she had made a conquest; but——”

“Will you be so good as to help me,” said Susan, who began to be as tired of this long anecdote, as she was anxious to bring it to a conclusion.

“Oh, certainly,” said Mr. Elliott. “What a knife!—Well; but I return to my simpleton. I soon undeceived the poor thing; for I hold it wrong, and quite contrary to my principles, to break a country girl’s heart. (He had vainly used his endeavors, in that way, more than once.) So, perceiving a respectable looking doctor, who appeared to be more intelligent than some of the rest of the party then assembled, I talked to him, and gave him some of my

Turkish receipts, till his delight expressed itself so oppressively, that I quitted the table. Next morning, having breakfasted in my dressing-room, I found on going down stairs, that most of the men were already gone out to shoot. I strolled about, till I found myself in the lady's boudoir, and there I remained, tête-à-tête, for four hours, perfectly unconscious that so many had elapsed, so lively was her wit, so sparkling her imagination, so eloquent her descriptions; so perfect an insight into the workings of the human mind did she evince, that I positively told her, as I afterwards joined her in the garden, that I should wish every word she had uttered were written down, that I might not lose one syllable, though the effect she had produced, never could, nor never shall, 'pon my soul, be effaced from my mind. Since then we have been on the most intimate terms, and I need not say, how highly I value her friendship."

"My dear Susan," said General Falkland, "Sherbourne tells me, that we may expect him and Lady Sherbourne and his daughters, next Friday, on their way to town." Susan said nothing; but she looked at her father with an arch smile, not exactly conveying an expression of satisfaction at the news.

Margaret laughed immoderately. "This will, perhaps, amuse you more," said she, putting a letter into her sister's hands, sealed with an enormous quantity of green wax, on which was engraven a hand and ring, over which was inscribed, "Joys I double—sorrows I divide." The address was in a hand unknown to her; and the whole appearance of the letter was so extraordinary, that she paused to examine it. In one corner was written in small text, with many waves and flourishes, "*private*;" a little lower, the name of "Miss Margaret;" and, on the left hand side, four capital letters revealed more completely the reason of the secrecy enjoined at the top: R—S—V—P. The contents of this curious looking document fully corres-

ponded to the promise held forth on the outside. It was as follows :—

“ Dear Madam,

It is now some time since I have had occasion to observe your many excellent qualifications, which, united to a pleasing person, have made such inroads on my peace, that I feel my happiness incomplete, till I have, my dear Madam, made you the offer of my heart and hand. No man can feel more indifference, than myself, to those worldly advantages, which are the inducements of many, when they determine upon entering into the holy and happy estate of matrimony. I am aware that your fortune, my dear Madam, is very unequal to that which I have to offer; but such inequalities I can overlook, and you will, doubtless know how to appreciate the disinterested nature of my feelings, by such an irrefragable proof of my affection.

You will observe, that I have enjoined privacy on the outside of this letter, in order to spare you the agitation, which a suspicion of its contents on the part of your father and sister might bring on; and I particularly request silence on the subject of my intentions, till the time arrives, when I may subscribe myself, more entirely than at present,

Yours,

THOMAS MAC CALL.”

The supposed agitation having evaporated in an uncontrollable burst of laughter from Margaret, and lent somewhat more of severity to Susan's judgment, than she was wont to pass on any one, however deserving of ridicule or censure, General Falkland inquired the cause of Margaret's mirth, and her sister's invectives against ignorance and presumption. The injunctions to silence, therefore, which Sir Thomas had added in his postscript were disobeyed; and General Falkland

perused the letter which his daughter gave him, with somewhat of the same feelings which they expressed, more loudly than his benevolence and calmness of manner would permit him to do. He whispered to Margaret that he trusted she would send as polite a rejection to Sir Thomas's overtures as she could frame; while she replied, that at least this occurrence would prevent their being so often favored with those morning visits which formed no very agreeable interruption to their occupations.

"At least," my dear, resumed her father, "do not keep the poor man in suspense. I shall send a messenger to-day to —, as I have some business to settle with Sir Thomas, and he may also receive your sentence."

Margaret hastened to obey her father's commands; and the day having now become quite fine, the rest of the party separated to prepare for walking.

When she again entered the drawing-room, she found Evelyn alone. He started as she approached, for her footstep was so light, he was not aware of her presence till she stood before him.

"May I ask," said Margaret, with a kindness of manner which deeply affected him, "may I ask if you have received bad news? I almost feared so when you left us so suddenly; but I was so much amused with a very absurd letter I had before me, that I am ashamed to say I forgot every thing else."

Evelyn endeavored to repress his emotion; but tears were in his eyes, as he replied, with a faltering voice, "I have, indeed, received intelligence which has filled me with self-reproach, and shown me the omission of a duty which I must seek instantly to repair. Oh! how I lament the selfishness which has made me forget the wants and wishes of others, in the indulgence of my own gratification! It is but fair I should now be the sufferer!"

"What can you mean?" said Margaret; "you speak in riddles to me; but I am sure you wrongfully accuse yourself when you say you are selfish."

"And is it not so, Margaret, when I have lingered here these last two months, indulging in vain and presumptuous thoughts and wishes, which never can be realized, while my uncle—my father's only brother—the last of his race save myself, widowed and alone—neglected by me, and, I now learn, on a bed of sickness—perhaps of death—is it not selfish in me to have banished the remembrance of *such* a relation for the sake of dreams which I now awake to disappointment?"

"I do indeed regret," said Margaret, who felt sincerely for the emotion which the usually calm and placid Evelyn at that moment betrayed. She scarcely knew by what method to soothe him; for having become aware of his unhappiness, she was too much confused to find words of sober consolation with which to address him. Afraid to utter the kind ones which her nature suggested, lest he should mistake her, and construe her words too favorably to his hopes,—*"I trust,"* at length she spake, "that your uncle may not be so ill as the letter leads you to imagine; and when he is cheered and revived by your kind care and attendance, he will not remember that you have absented yourself so long from him: surely he could not expect that at your age you should devote yourself entirely to his sick couch."

"At all events," said Evelyn, "I *ought* to have done so. But enough of that; I must not annoy you by farther expressions of my regret; I shall find my punishment in years of lonely sorrow, such as I trust you will never experience. I must leave you to-morrow, and perhaps may never again visit these dear scenes, where I have spent days of happiness such as may not again return for me. Blessings be on you, dear Margaret," added he, burying his face in his hands, while tears almost choked his utterance.

"May every fondest wish of your heart be realized! Mine will not break, if such be the result of what has occasioned me so much suffering. May the bliss which he enjoys, who has robbed me of every hope, lead him to all that is best and noblest in human thought and action! and may your path be bright and happy as my prayers implore!"

Margaret trembled from head to foot: she knew not her secret had been discovered; for, till that moment, Evelyn had appeared blind to that, which, in such an open nature as hers, could scarcely be concealed from so intimate a friend. But as he proceeded, with a warmth and vehemence unusual to him, to call down blessings on her and on Eric Hamilton, as if their happiness were, indeed, inseparably connected, she could not refrain from admiring the generosity and nobleness of mind of her early friend and companion. While she tacitly allowed the justice of his surmises, by thanking him warmly for his good wishes, she could not refrain her tears of sympathy for his affliction, though she uttered no words of consolation.

"Hear me, Margaret! When I am gone, should pain or sorrow ever visit you—which Heaven avert!—remember the companion of your infancy, the friend of your youth; remember that no one—no, Margaret, not even he whom I cannot name now—can sympathise more truly, or would devote himself more entirely to preserve you from any sorrow, to guard you from every misfortune. Should such a day ever frown upon you, think of me, I entreat you, and, trust me, I will fly to serve you, though it should be to the earth's utmost boundary. Yes, Margaret, these are not vain words; this heart beats with no sudden, no transient emotion; the love that years have fostered, pervades my very being, nor can be extinguished but with life itself."

Margaret extended her hand: he clasped it to his heart, and to his lips; then, rising suddenly, as if un-

able to trust his utterance farther, was leaving the room, when turning, once more, with a melancholy smile, he said : " Margaret ! do you remember giving me, years ago, when you were yet a child, a small plant of jessamine ? Perhaps you have forgotten it ; but I planted it in the summer-house, near the burn, and have often gazed on its white blossoms, when you were slumbering. Will you nurture it for my sake ? Will you not permit its removal from that spot ? Will you, sometimes, wear a sprig of its blossoms in memory of one who is an exile from these dear scenes, for your sake !"—Margaret promised ; and, leaning her brow against the marble of the chimney-piece, she beheld not the last agonized glance of poor Evelyn, as he rushed from her presence.

" Bless me !" said Mrs. Stewart, who entered abruptly in walking costume ; " bless me, my dear girl, what are you about, musing here alone ? We have been all through the wood, and round by the strath. We met your father and sister, and all the gentlemen. My uncle pointed out an excellent spot for the erection of a piggery, which will be a beautiful object from the windows ; and the General has serious thoughts of following his advice. Why, my dear, were you not with us ?"

" I had letters to write," said Margaret, glad that the afternoon was so far advanced, that the light was scarcely strong enough to betray the traces of emotion on her countenance. " I fear it is too late, now, to go out."

" Too late, my dear !" rejoined Mrs. Stewart, " to be sure it is ; but how foolish, to write letters at such a time ! I never allow my children to write a word till they have taken an hour's walk ; and even their Greek lessons are deferred in the morning till they have had some exercise."

The steps of the rest of the party were heard advancing ; and Margaret, excusing herself on the plea



of a head-ache, was retreating; but, ere she reached the staircase, Eric Hamilton was by her side: he held in his hand a nosegay, from which he drew some flowers, and begged her to accept of them. Poor Evelyn was almost forgotten, as she placed them carefully in water on the table; but when she recalled his words—his broken-hearted appearance—the generosity of his feelings—the excellence of his long-tried disposition, she again felt more deeply for his sorrow, than she could have imagined herself capable of doing for any but one.

The dinner party was assembled at table before she re-appeared, and she was a good deal confused by the inquiries which were generally made, as to the cause of her unusual lateness. Her father rallied her on her having suffered, by his command, to refuse so much that was delightful for his sake. Evelyn looked inquiringly; a thousand contending thoughts passed through his mind; but he remembered what Sir Thomas had told him concerning his intentions, and he guessed General Falkland's meaning. Margaret glanced at Hamilton, and could not help feeling disappointed at observing no curiosity depicted on his countenance. He was gazing fixedly on her sister, who seemed to be deeply engaged in conversation with Lord de Tracey. The nosegay he had given Margaret was in her bosom, but being mostly wild flowers, these early spring blossoms soon faded, and as she observed their decay, a sigh escaped her, not unremarked by Evelyn, who, pale and dejected, was placed opposite to her, and could not avoid taking many a lingering look on that dear countenance which he thought, he might soon see no more.

In reply to one of Mrs. Stewart's numerous questions, the General acquainted her with Evelyn's intended departure. "But," added he, "there is one comfort in his absence—we know that he will very soon return; at least in as far as aught of certainty per-

tains to human will ; for he is aware, I cannot long be happy without him, and the house is not itself when he is away."

Evelyn dared not trust himself to speak, or even to look towards Margaret, in whose cheek a crimson blush was rising, and an emotion so painful tightened her respiration, that her sister observed her distress, and wondered at the cause, for she had not then learnt the full *extent* of poor Evelyn's unhappiness; though she could not but be aware of his affection for Margaret. The evening passed gloomily. Mr. Lazenby, finding the ladies had become inattentive, contented himself with Mr. Mac Farlane as a listener, and the good man was forced to hear, for the hundredth time at least, the history of his Zoologia, an embryo work on his favorite theory. Mrs. Stewart contrived to lay violent hands on Mr. Elliott, whom she literally detained by holding his button-hole in spite of his impatience, while recording to him her family history, from the first of the Lazenby's, to the remotest branch of the Stewart family, down to the promising youths, whose mental and bodily estate she never neglected to speak of in the most detailed terms.

Susan played at écarté with her father, while Lord de Tracey looked on, and Eric Hamilton asked Margaret to sing. Her voice would scarcely obey her wishes; her heart was too full to give that expression which in happier hours sparkled in her songs of joy, or melted into a tenderness which was not once too powerfully excited to be expressed. Certain it is, that (neither poets nor musicians can exhibit their highest powers under the immediate influence of intense feeling; the heart must have experienced the power of such moments; but the voice or the pen can describe them only when the excitement they produced has, in a measure, subsided.) Hamilton wondered why she sang so unlike herself; but Evelyn, who guessed the cause, felt, more keenly than ever, the bitterness of

being forced to surrender that which he prized so highly, and he could scarcely master himself to bid her adieu, in the presence of so many indifferent spectators. "Come back very soon," said Susan, pressing his hand warmly in hers; you know we cannot do without you, and we shall never be able to make papa happy till you return: and remember to write to us very often."

While her sister spoke, Margaret silently pressed his hand, cold as marble, and glided to her own room, where she burst into tears, and thought far more of him than she had ever done at the very time she wished most to forget him.

Next morning the wheels of a carriage, at an unusually early hour, before the door, excited her attention: between sleeping and waking, she almost forgot the cause of it; but just as she rose, and looked from the window, she saw Evelyn's carriage receding through the trees of the avenue,—her father still standing on the steps, as if to catch the last glimpse of his dear young friend, whose departure he so sincerely regretted.

## CHAPTER VIII.

The heart dies many deaths, ere still'd for ever;  
And when we say, that we must not remember,—  
That only means, how vain is the endeavor  
To bid our spirit from the lov'd ones sever!

In a small bay by the sea, completely encircled on every side, save one with high jetting rocks, so as to give it the appearance of an inland lake, is situated the little village of ———. It is chiefly composed of very small huts, whose heather roofs age has tinted with varied-colored mosses; the rocks, which tower above this row of buildings, lining the little bay, are generally unadorned by tree or shrub, save where a solitary mountain ash, according to the season, spreads its feathery leaves, or white blossoms, or bright red berries, across the blue sky; to the right, the towering remains of an old monastery, partially covered with ivy, relieve the outline, and add an interest to the picturesque effect of the whole; a number of small boats, in which fishing-nets are suspended on poles, hung crossways from mast to mast, are moored near the jutting rocks around, and the bright coloring of the fisherman's clothing, or that of the plaided damsels who are occasionally seen flitting among the rocks, are reflected on the clear smooth water, which seldom receives more than a ripple from the breeze in that sheltered nook.

There is altogether an air of repose and tranquil happiness in this little spot, which even the great poverty of its inhabitants hardly seems to impair; the occupation of the men, depending on the season, leaves them often at leisure to stray by the water's edge with their children in their arms, or to assist in the household cares of their wives, while repairing their nets,

they hang them to dry on their resting places; here and there, in fine weather, some of them may be seen stretched at their door, with their dog beside them, pondering over the sacred page; for, in the Highlands, there are few of the poorest class of persons who cannot read, and few sounds are heard to echo among the rocks, save the occasional call of one fisherman to another, or the laugh of almost naked children, who are playing in happy groups on the sands, sailing their mimic boats in the shallow wave. From time to time the paddle of a steam boat, which, at stated intervals, inserts its monstrous machinery within the peaceful and retired bay, is announced by the water's swell, and the loud roaring of the evaporating steam, as it stops to land the passengers. Then the little quay is crowded by every idler in the village, repairing thither in the hopes of being entrusted with some of the passengers' luggage, to bear it to "the inn." This inn, without a rival, is a square white house, the only slated mansion in the village, which, with its pompous appellation, engraved in capital gilt letters above the door, becomes, on such days, the object of general wonder and admiration. True it is, that the hostelry seldom entertains more exalted personages than Low Country graziers, who are on their way to purchase Highland cattle, or native farmers returning from the Stirling or Downe markets; yet now and then visitors to Walrond Castle, of a superior rank, are seen entering Mr. Mac Ewen's inn. Then, what potent fumes of herring mingle with the smoke of singed mutton chops and greasy kail, while the unceasing libations of whisky, at the deal table of the lower parlor, ratify every bargain between the loud-toned drovers.

It was late in the afternoon when Evelyn reached this spot; and when General Falkland's servant entered to inquire whether he had any message to the castle, by the return of the horses, he felt as if, for the first time, he had really bade, for ever, adieu to those

dear scenes and dearer beings whom he had left. Mrs. Mac Ewen's dinner courted him in vain, and he sat musing, in melancholy abstraction, till an unusual bustle in the village attracted his notice, and he rose to ascertain from the window what could be cause of it. The stream of smoke from the funnel of a newly arrived steamer, soon resolved his doubts; and, scarcely knowing what he did, he remained listlessly watching the egress of old women laden with blue wooden chests, egg baskets, bundles and cloaks, who stopped, in picturesque groups, conversing with the more quiet villagers, who eagerly listened to the tales of wonder collected during their travels. At last the dandified figure of a middle-aged gentleman, covered with studs and chains, who supported on his arm a lady in fashionable attire, followed by two younger ones, was seen picking his way, with mincing steps, along the road leading to the inn, and as they approached, he at once recognised in these the persons of Lord and Lady Sherbourne, and their two daughters,—General Falkland's expected guests. What was to be done? The room in which he was dining was the only apartment in the house fit for what the host called genteel company; the bed-rooms were full of peat smoke, the fragrance of which did not confine itself to these, but was diffused through the whole interior atmosphere.

Evelyn was not long left to ruminate on possibilities, for the door opened, and the lass, twisting her apron in her hands, inquired whether the gentleman had any objection to the entrance of some gran' travellers, who, she said, had just arrived by the steam boat; "they are real fine looking folk," added she, "your honour need have no objection."

"Oh! certainly not," said Evelyn, and in a few moments Lord and Lady Sherbourne entered, and the Miss Sherbourne's were depositing their bonnets, reticules, and shawls on the horse-hair sofa, which was the chief ornament of Mr. Mac Ewen's saloon. Lord

Sherbourne was not long in recognising Mr. Marchmont; and, voluble as his language generally was, Evelyn thought he that day surpassed himself. The half-uttered words of salutation which Lady Sherbourne attempted, were totally drowned in the torrents of his eloquence, and Evelyn's courteous address to the young ladies shared the same fate.

Lord Sherbourne was a man somewhat beyond middle life, but whether through want of any hurtful excess of feeling, (as some suspected,) or through the exceeding care unceasingly bestowed on a natural handsome person, his form was still erect, and his brow unfurrowed, and his fine dark eyes beamed with undiminished lustre. It was supposed that the continual contemplation of his own merits had given to his complexion that smooth and unruffled appearance, which the restlessness of his nature would otherwise have impaired; for nature had bountifully endowed him with the requisites for personal activity: his limbs were strong, and his person well made—his health invariably good—his head was filled with a multitude of schemes, his mind, ever in a small bustle about nothing, and his heart set upon the good things of this world. He loved plotting and projecting for their sake, independent of ulterior views; and he had so many irons in the fire, so many castles in the air, that the frequent demolition of some of them but little affected his peace.

In early life he had persuaded Lady Sherbourne to become his wife, although there seemed but little in him to recommend so opposite a character to her preference, except contrast. This may, perhaps, in some cases, be an inducement to those who are too young, or too thoughtless, to give credit to another for different faults from those with which they are acquainted. Poor Lady Sherbourne's gentle, or rather passive nature, was not wholly proof against the worrying disposition of her ambitious worldly husband; but the pa-

tience with which she endured his ways, passed for approbation, and they were reckoned a very happy couple. Lord Sherbourne possessed talent sufficient to attract people of all kinds to his table: the fashionable, because they were sure of meeting many of their own class; the gay, because they liked to laugh at him; the serious, because he passed with them *au premier abord* for a man of deep thought and active benevolence; the learned, because, by dint of indefatigable locomotion, by walking, riding, driving, writing, &c., he had contrived to collect some information, and a large stock of rarities, in the literary way; indeed, his library was the resort of all the Bibliomaniacs of Europe. His never-failing fluency enabled him to make the most of the superficial knowledge he had picked up; so that he could make a better figure in an argumentative discussion than many an abler man; or, if he occasionally got out of his depth, he had a peculiar knack of extricating himself with a few broken sentences, which conveyed the impressions that he was only averse to make a parade of his learning. His claim to science, therefore, backed by dinners of sterling merit, insured him a very fair share of respect from his talented guests. His was not a character which could in the least assimilate with that of Evelyn, who felt it a relief, when Lord Sherbourne left the room to bustle about their arrangements for the night, to turn to the gentle Lady Sherbourne, who had seated herself patiently with her daughters' bags and bundles on the sofa, and merely requested he would poke the fire, as she felt very cold. The daughters partook, however, in some degree, of their father's loquacity, and would by no means permit so good-looking a young man to devote himself entirely to their mother. One asked him about the last new number of Miss Martineau's new work, and whether it were equal to the former ones; for she had learnt from her father to attempt a shade of blue. The oth-



er gave a somewhat tedious and minute detail of the whole circumstances of their passage from Glasgow, of the several odd inmates of the cabin, and the difficulty they had experienced in landing from the boat. The cultivated one then went on to inquire after Walwood Castle—what sort of place it was—whether it had a good library—and who was there?

This subject was more likely to interest Evelyn than any other: yet, to speak with those who had not a feeling in common with him, on the subject of those most dear to him, concerning whom there was a hallowed sentiment which he could not bear to be profaned, seemed treason to his heart's devotion: he therefore endeavored to school his looks, while he replied, with as much indifference as he could assume, and in short sentences, to the numerous interrogations with which his patience was assailed. Lord Sherbourne again appeared.

"Pray, Mr. Marchmont," said he, advancing on tip-toe, playing with his eye-glass with one hand, the other on his side, his shoulders elevated, and his head advanced, with a peculiarly absurd expression of affected simplicity—"Pray, Mr. Marchmont, can you inform me whether General Falkland expected us? My carriage cannot be landed, I find, till the tide is in; so that we shall have to put up here for the night, and I know not whether we can all be accommodated."

"My room is at your service," said Evelyn, "and, I doubt not, I can procure accommodation elsewhere. Mr. Mac Ewen's single pair of horses will drag your coach very slowly over those bad roads; so that, even were it landed, it would be too late for you to set off this evening. General Falkland did not expect you, I believe, till Friday, as your letter intimated."

"Ah, very true—very true, my dear Mr. Marchmont," said Lord Sherbourne, seizing Evelyn by the arm "pray how is the General? What a noble looking creature he is! What a flow of animated conversation! How superior his judgment!"

"He is, certainly, a fine-looking old man," said the eldest Miss Sherbourne.

"Old!" said her father, with a look and tone of ill-humour, which the next moment he strove to conceal. "My dear Anne, it is quite childish to call everybody old that is out of their teens. General Falkland is quite in the prime of life," continued he, for his plans had long been laid to persuade his simple friend, as he imagined General Falkland, to marry his eldest daughter, who had begun to approach that nervous period in a young lady's life, which we would on no account venture to name.

Miss Sherbourne was silenced, not only by the severe look of her father, whose anger she dreaded, but because her mind's eye, faithful to the direction this prudent parent had given it, glanced at the possibility of becoming mistress of Walrond Castle.

"And how are the young ladies?" continued Lord Sherbourne. "I wonder that my very excellent friend's usual good sense should have yielded such indulgence to their natural love of gaiety, by permitting them to appear in the great world at so unusually early an age."

"Dear me," said Lady Sherbourne, gently; "I believe the eldest is eighteen."

"Bless me," replied her spouse, impatiently, who began to fear that his worst foes were those of his own household. "Bless me, Lady Sherbourne; why, will you never hold your tongue? always speaking of what you know nothing about. I tell you they are children—positively children."

Evelyn sighed inwardly. "Would they were so still!" thought he; "no pain would mingle then with the duty which bids me leave her for ever."

His meditations thus wandering from those around him, the young ladies thought him as stupid as a good-looking young man can be; and Anne agreed that he was too young to be interesting. Lord Sherbourne

however, was highly satisfied with his abstraction, as it convinced him that his rudeness of manner to Lady Sherbourne had been unobserved, and afforded him an opportunity of studying his plan of operations, previous to his grand attack upon Walrond Castle and its master.

"Pray, Mr. Marchmont, does the General see much company now—are his spirits equal to such an exertion?"

"There are several visitors there at present," replied Evelyn; "and General Falkland will have a pleasant accession by your arrival."

"Oh! not at all," said Lord Sherbourne—"not at all; but I did not wish to pass so near without seeing my old friend."

The real fact, however, was, he had travelled two days' journey out of his way for the sole purpose of forwarding his schemes on the General, with regard to his eldest daughter, on which he had set his heart from the time of his son's death; and the desire had increased since his last failure with a rich Baronet, who slightly fancied Miss Sherbourne, and might have married her, but for a long and detailed interrogatory letter, which Lord Sherbourne, in his wisdom, penned to a particular friend of his, strictly enjoining secrecy, at the conclusion, from the unsuspecting Baronet; the disobedience of which injunction spared the latter from falling into the snare.

Such a suspicion crossed Evelyn's mind, though he wished not to encourage it; and Lord Sherbourne continued: "Pray, will you be so kind as to mention those who are at Walrond Castle; one likes to be *au fait* of those one is to meet; and my daughters are so foolishly shy, they are easily confused in the presence of strangers." Evelyn named the party: he hesitated as he mentioned Mr. Hamilton. Lord Sherbourne's attention was roused by the name of Lord de Tracey; and, as his imagination travelled fast, he already, in active, saw the coronet on Maria's brow.

Miss Maria, in a tone of well-assumed compassion, said,—“Oh! Mr. Hamilton! that is the poor young man who ruined himself by play. I heard it said last season, in town, that Miss Margaret Falkland was to be married to him; but I suppose, of course, that is not true—is it, Mr. Marchmont?”

Evelyn knew not how to reply. He expressed his ignorance on that subject with some difficulty; but Lord Sherbourne's volubility soon relieved him from his confusion; and, as soon as he could withdraw himself from a society which wearied and annoyed him, he retired, under pretence of having letters to write. Long, however, after the clock on the staircase had struck twelve, he heard the indefatigable voice of Lord Sherbourne, keeping his poor wife awake, as well as himself; and he had little time or inclination for repose ere he was summoned by the horn on the quay, which gave the usual note of preparation to enter the steam boat, which was to return that day to ———, from whence he was to proceed by land to his uncle's house.

Next day, he found himself at the gates of the park, and with a beating heart, he awaited the appearance of the porter, of whom he made eager inquiries regarding Lord Ormiston's health. His anticipations had been so gloomy, that the answer he received somewhat relieved his heart. “Thank God! I have not come too late,” he mentally ejaculated, throwing himself back in the carriage, as it drove up the long dark avenue which led to the house. There was an air of gloom about the place, which not even the bright season of spring could dissipate; it happened to be one of those dull grey days so frequent in autumn, but which rarely occur in this season of life and vegetation. Evelyn felt its influence, but did not regret it at that time; the depression of his spirits rather found relief in outward gloom, and the

of sunshine would have presented too great a contrast to the tone of his feelings.

Ormiston Hall was a large building, in the Gothic style; the heavy stone buttresses, by casting deep shadows before the windows, produced a sombre effect, only relieved by the evergreens and roses which twined their shining leaves and gaudy blossoms round the high arched windows. In days gone by, when mirth and gladness reigned there, when lights gleaming from every window promised to the approaching visiter scenes of social happiness or gaiety within, Ormiston Hall was regarded as one of the most delightful seats in the neighborhood; wide stone terraces, enriched with shrubs and green-house plants, stretched down a sloping bank from the eminence on which the house stood, to the banks of a sparkling stream, whose frequent murmur was soothing to the ear of those to whom custom had endeared the sound. From these terraces, the eye might gaze with pleasure on the fair expanse of field and forest, terminated by a ridge of hills to the west, and the ocean's long line of blue on the east: thick masses of timber concealed the distance on the opposite side of the mansion, and formed a beautiful back-ground to the grey coloring of which the building was composed.

Evelyn was considerably relieved by finding his uncle so much better than he had hoped. His welcome was as warm as ever; and it was gratifying to the amiable disposition of Evelyn to witness the general rejoicing which his arrival occasioned throughout his uncle's household. Many of the servants had been his father's; and all who knew the worth and excellence of the son, hailed his arrival as a day of jubilee.

Evelyn felt ashamed of the despairing sorrow which had almost overwhelmed him since his parting with Margaret. He looked around on the many blessings and comforts which Providence had bestowed on him, and not the least among these did he consider the bless-

ed privilege of affording consolation, or even happiness, to others. He resolved to devote his life to this pursuit, and endeavor to forget the disappointment which had blighted his early hopes. A thrill of honest joy seemed to give new strength to his mind and body, and that evening, long after the usual hour for Lord Ormiston's retiring to rest, Evelyn sat by his couch alternately entertaining him with serious conversation, and with lively sallies, of which he would scarcely have thought himself capable before. When he lay down to rest, fatigued with his journey, and with the mental exertion he had made, a sense of calm satisfaction, arising out of the fulfilment of duty, superseded even his regrets. Was it that lingering hope still dwelt within his breast? Who can trace all the workings of the human heart? But be that as it might, gratitude and virtuous intention guarded his conscience and sanctified his feelings.

## CHAPTER IX.

"By day, by night, in weal or wo,  
That heart, no longer free,  
Must bear the love it cannot show,  
And silent ache for thee."

BYRON.

It was not with equal serenity of mind that Evelyn first awoke in Ormiston Hall. Those who have known what it is to open their eyes, for the first time, in the absence of all excitement, (which, while travelling, had scarcely subsided in Evelyn's mind,) after a severe trial, or the disappointment of the heart's dearest hopes, can know how he felt in awaking to recollection,—in recalling those happy hours at Walrond Castle, when, whatever else might occur, he knew he should meet the smile which threw a radiance over every object around him,—when he was certain of hearing that voice, sweeter to him than music's most delicious tones, and which never had breathed one word of wilful unkindness to any living ear. Dull and dreary was now the murmuring sound of that stream which flowed beneath Ormiston Hall, and which was only varied by the cawing of the rooks who built their nests in the large pine trees, whose branches spread around in melancholy grandeur. He looked from his window, and saw the young blossoms of the Ghean trees\* just bursting into beauty amid the fresh green leaves; every tree and shrub betokening the "*soote season*;" the morning shone with bright promise of a golden day, such as he had loved *when she* he loved was by his side. For her sake he had prized each opening flower; her gentle nature, he knew, was formed to taste the full enjoyment of such innocent delights; and with her he had experienced that most blissful of

\* A species of wild cherry.

all sensations, the silent consciousness of perfect sympathy, while in every lovely and inspiring object in nature he recognised and adored the great Being who had called them into existence. Alas! these days were gone—from him,—and gone for ever! Duty, honor, friendship, forbade it; and Evelyn's generous nature felt this keenly; for, aware of General Falkland's affection and regard for him, he could not but be sensible that his influence would all be exerted in his favor: and how could he bear to make use of the General's regard, to the disappointment of him whom she loved? No: rather would he relinquish his dearest wishes, than see her tried by the expression of a father's displeasure, or be compelled, in compliance with a father's wish, to feign a preference which affection had failed to excite. But Evelyn was not wont to endure the pangs of nature's regrets unassisted and alone; it was with no cold formality that he daily offered thanksgivings for his creation, as well as for all the blessings of life; and while he saw all nature engaged in one general hymn of praise, he joined his voice with a fervent heart, seeking the promised aid of strength to meet his trials, with an earnestness which never pleads in vain, and never leaves the suppliant despairing.

He had not been long dressed, when his uncle sent for him; and glad did he feel when those dear withered hands clasped his so affectionately, while, with almost childish simplicity, he thanked him for having returned to him, and assured him that even dear Caroline's care had not been half so soothing to him as his would be. "And who is Caroline," inquired Evelyn, "who has taken the place which I ought never to have suffered to be vacant?"

"Do not say so," my dear boy; "I have missed you, it is true; but I never would allow Gilpin to send you word that I was ill, till I feared, one night, I was dying; and then I wished once more to obtain a sight of my dear boy."



Evelyn pressed his hand with a warmth which could not vent itself in words, and a tear stole from his full heart to his eye.

His uncle continued—

“Do you not remember the daughter of my old college companion, Somerville, with whom I have always kept up a friendly intercourse? His daughter, Caroline, was in bad health last year; and, being recommended change of air and scene, her father was induced to bring her to the Highlands; she rallied so much that he yielded to my persuasions, and agreed to occupy, for a short time, the pretty house in the Glen, which had been vacant since the death of my cousin Martha. The society of my old friend has been a great solace to me, and Caroline seems so much benefited by our bracing air, that I trust she may soon quite regain her strength. Poor child; I fear she has forgot herself in her attentions to me, latterly; but her father does not think so, for he has agreed to leave her under my care, when he returns to his vicarage,—which, I fear, he will soon be obliged to do. Now, my dear boy, I have been indulging myself in forming plans for you: you must see and admire my young favorite, and then, I hope, you will be at no loss to guess what they are: she cannot fail to please you; you must love her—and to see it will shed a brightness on my last days.”

Evelyn sighed.

“Ah, Evelyn, my dear,” said his uncle, with an inquiring look—“why that sigh?”

The question was not made in a tone of common anxiety; the interrogator did not seek carelessly to lift the veil from a heart whose happiness he prized beyond his own, but with sincere and heartfelt concern, and with a tenderness more like that of woman, his uncle gazed on Evelyn's downcast countenance, while he, at that moment, in the fulness of his heart, felt that he could not withhold his secret from one to whom his happiness seemed his first object.

Lord Ormiston heard his confession with silent regret and deep sympathy; and when Evelyn's few hurried and dejected sentences were uttered, he gently said, "How beautiful her mother was when General Falkland first returned from India! Well do I remember her looks of ineffable sweetness, and the more than earthly love that beamed in her soft expressive eye. I have not seen her daughters since they were children, but I can imagine how charming they must be, from the promise their early beauties gave; and she, who is your heart's treasure, I thought the loveliest, the most endearing, as I held her on my knee, and marked the cherub smile which played around her bright lips, and the laughing lustre of her large blue eye. It cannot be, my dear boy, that she should prefer that wild and reckless Hamilton to you. Surely your anxiety has blinded you, and you will yet see your hopes fulfilled."

How Evelyn loved his uncle for these words! but he would not seem to believe them. He shook his head mournfully. "No," said he, "I dare not think so; but let me not harass you more with this painful subject. I will endeavor to forget all save the wish for her happiness."

The hours passed cheerily to Lord Ormiston, while Evelyn sat by his couch, which was placed near the window, opening on the sunny terrace, that he might enjoy the sweet calm air laden with the fragrance of violets, and other early plants of spring, emitted their sweets with the exotics which bloomed near. Mr. Somerville and his daughter were expected to dinner, and Evelyn was not sorry to think that his uncle should be cheered by other society than his own, for he felt almost unequal to the continued exertion of concealing from his uncle's anxious and affectionate eye the weight which hung upon his spirits.

When Evelyn entered the drawing-room before dinner, he found the guests already arrived. He recog

nised in Mr. Somerville, one whose benign expression of countenance and amiable manners recalled to his mind an acquaintance he had formed some years previous, and which he felt it a satisfaction to renew. The dim twilight partially disclosed the slight but tall figure of an elegant looking girl—brought to his heart, for a moment, a quicker pulsation—but the next moment realized the consciousness of disappointment; and, like one awaking from a dream of bliss, he calmly returned her salutation. Lord Ormiston introduced him to Miss Somerville. His eye might have gazed on brighter beauty, his heart might have beat for one of more enthusiastic temperament, more sparkling genius and more refined grace, but none could look on one of more feminine loveliness than Caroline's; no sweeter disposition or more tender heart existed, than that of this daughter of a country clergyman; who, brought up under the constant superintendence of so excellent and pious a man, retired from scenes of worldly temptation, and devoting her happy life to the care of her father's poor parishioners, had scarcely learnt one lesson from the world's cold philosophy, to chill the native warmth of her heart, and knew as little of evil as is in the nature of frail humanity. She was innately timid, and, never having enjoyed a mother's or a sister's society, had learnt to repress the expression of her thoughts, so that she was usually silent, save when alone with her father, whom she loved with the most devoted affection, and whose otherwise lonely life was cheered by her constant and tender attentions. His soul had been filled with anguish, such as an anxious father only can feel, on beholding the insidious approaches of a disorder, whose effects, though betrayed only by the increasing delicacy and the ethereal appearance of her form and countenance, could not deceive the anxious and apprehensive eyes of parental love.

"Even Evelyn remarked, with commiseration, the hectic flush on her cheek, the azure tint of the veins which shone transparent through her calm and serene brow, and the delicate drooping bend of a figure, which seemed scarcely able to support its slight weight.

The reverence which Caroline felt for her father was heightened by the respect with which Lord Ormiston attended to him; for, though better versed in the wisdom of this world than Mr. Somerville, the heart of Lord Ormiston was chastened to a child-like simplicity, by the effects of years of trial and suffering, and there was a mildness in his manner, derived from this true humility, which lent an additional charm to the natural grace and superiority of his address. Every amiable characteristic of Evelyn's disposition was elicited by the tone of conversation which prevailed between these friends, and Caroline listened to them with an admiration, which threw the glow of pleasure over her sweet countenance.

"How different," thought Evelyn, "this amiable young creature from the Miss Sherbournes! He had felt it a heavy task, spending even a few moments in their society, after parting with Margaret; Caroline Somerville's soft loveliness and serene disposition, on the contrary, were soothing to him; nor did he feel a suspicion of heart's treason to his beloved, while reviving to pleasure under her gentle influence. Days passed, and still the same party met every evening; and sometimes, while Caroline accompanied Lord Ormiston on his morning drive, Evelyn rode with her father, and enjoyed a communion of thought from which his own mind acquired new vigor. Mr. Somerville, ever mindful of his high office, sought not to veil the calm and steady light which illumined his understanding and cheered his heart; and though never intrusive with his counsels or his opinions, he seldom failed to throw on every object the gilding of his own

high and exulting faith, "touching all things with the heat of heaven." Sometimes Evelyn walked on the flower-terraces with Miss Somerville, who, perhaps, found more pleasure in such society than in the long drives, even with her dear Lord Ormiston: yet he was often the theme of their conversation, and Evelyn could not but admire the respect, mingled with tenderness, which she evinced for his aged relation: he felt gratitude for that kindness which, in his absence, had softened the gloom of his suffering hours, and cheered his solitude.

Was a softer sentiment than that of gratitude then taking root in the young heart of Caroline, ere she was herself aware of it? Why did she so long for the time when her father's summons called her to accompany him to Ormiston Hall? Why did she feel the hours long heavy, that before were so pleasant, while dining with Lord Ormiston? Why did the hectic bloom of her pale cheek glow to brightness, and her languid eye light up with joy, when she described Evelyn from afar dismounting from his horse, advancing up the steps of the terrace? Why did her heart beat so quickly as he approached? and wherefore was she silent when she met his eye? That eye beamed on her with no softer glance than that of friendship; why could she not reply to the question so calmly uttered? She knew not. Eighteen summers had not yet shone upon her, and she had till that time lived apart from all intercourse with those of her own age.

"She never loved till now."

And did she then love him? Alas, that beneath the influence of that air, which was daily reviving her delicate health, she should be deemed to breathe the atmosphere of a passion, which, like the insidious disease that preyed upon her frame, should only be remedied by the destruction it should effect!

The hour had not arrived for Caroline to be aware of the cause which now threw more than a summer

sunshine over all around her. Two months flew swiftly by, and Evelyn was still near her; and her dear Lord Ormiston was kind and good as ever, and her father happier than she had ever seen him. She looked not to the morrow, she realized not the remembrance that "all that's bright must fade." When, in other days, she sang of earthly love, knowing it but by name, it seemed as if the elements of that strongest sentiment of woman's heart were heard in her strain. How much more, then, in these days, when the sentiment, in all its pure fervency, gave an expression, whose source was not even suspected by him who inspired it!

But not thus unsuspecting was Mr. Somerville. His watchful eye perceived the emotion, which, with all her inmate modesty, was unwillingly betrayed, when Evelyn approved her song, in language to which past remembrances lent a tone of tenderness not excited by the singer. Mr. Somerville judged it best, however, to appear blind to what she could not hide from one so devoted to her every interest. He judged with all a father's partiality that it would be difficult for a young man of Evelyn's taste and feelings to resist the fascination of Caroline; especially, should he discover that he was himself the object of her preference; nay, with the high opinion he had formed of Evelyn's worth and character, he felt that to no one could he entrust his daughter's happiness with more assured satisfaction; again, he thought, that, were his surmises unfounded, the suggestion might awaken in her bosom thoughts which, but for that, might have slumbered; or, if but in the dawn of their existence, might fade away in absence, in the society of others of her own age. He dreaded, besides, in the delicate state of her health, to enter on any agitating or exciting subject; and the very tenderness which sought to spare her the pain of a moment, served to lull her more and more in the dream of security.

It was under these circumstances that Mr. Somerville received a letter requiring his immediate pre-

sence at his rectory. What was to be done? He could not think of subjecting Caroline to the fatigue of a hurried journey, in her weak state; and yet to leave her alone at the house which they inhabited, though so near Ormiston Hall, was not to be thought of. Lord Ormiston earnestly and affectionately urged her father to entrust her to his care; pointed out a suite of apartments, in which, he said, she might at all times enjoy perfect solitude and tranquillity; and entreated him to give up every thought of removing her from a spot which had already produced such an improvement in her. "Besides," urged Lord Ormiston, "your duty will not long detain you, and then you can return to find her restored to perfect health."

Mr. Somerville felt the force of the plea, and, but for his anxiety on the subject of his daughter's interest, he would have yielded without a scruple. She herself decided the matter: she scarcely analysed her own feelings, nor did she know why she felt so averse to returning, at that time, to the loved rectory—that spot where her happy childhood had passed in undisturbed enjoyment, where so many occupations, once full of deep interest to her, had been interrupted by her decline of health: why did she not wish to renew them? How could she bear to see her father depart, even for a brief interval,—she, who had never, till then, been one day separated from him? She could not reply; but she felt that she could relinquish everything sooner than Ormiston, at that time. Her father saw her struggle, and he—who had never resisted one of her innocent wishes,—how could he then refrain from yielding to Lord Ormiston's entreaties?

Caroline and her attendant became inmates of Ormiston Hall; and Mr. Somerville, notwithstanding that faith which was wont to keep his mind in peace, departed, not without an anxious throbbing at his heart, as for the first time he left his darling to the care of others.

## CHAPTER X.

A body may, in simple way,  
Read love in shepherds' eyes;  
A body may,—ah! well-a-day!  
Find love though in disguise.  
There is a body loves a body,  
I could tell you who——

OLD SONG.

It was matter of surprise to Margaret, that she should miss Evelyn's society so much as she did; and unwillingly she made the acknowledgment, not without shame, to her sister, in the privacy of their chambers there, when the rest of the household had retired to rest, they were wont to converse over the events of the day, to speak freely of their several interests, with that warm sympathy, which, next to that of a dearer tie, is the sweetest which human love creates between heart and heart.

Whatever difference of disposition may exist between sisters, there is a secret bond which unites the most dissimilar in that connexion: the very varieties of character which we observe in those with whom we have lived from infancy, serve to cement a pure affection, unlike in nature to any other: the remembrance of it sheds a subdued radiance on after hours, when separation, by other ties, or by death, has thrown us on a cold world; to meet its trial unsupported by such alleviating sympathy.

Perhaps Susan, in more reflective mood, would have avoided the subject, for she would have dreaded to appear, even to herself, in the light of a dissembler, while seeking to elicit from her sister the expression of regret at Evelyn's absence; but she had observed a sigh escape her dear Margaret when she spoke of him, and hope whispered that, perhaps,



after all, she might yet prefer Evelyn to the present object of their mutual preference. Alas! the sigh was not for Evelyn.

Mr. Hamilton had seemed, latterly, to shun her society, even preferring to converse with the Miss Sherbournes,—without being aware of it; she missed the thousand attentions with which Evelyn used to gladden those moments in which he was absent or inattentive; and, though unwilling to avow, even to herself, that she regretted these, she found more leisure to remark the listless air with which Eric Hamilton heard her speak, or, what was yet more strange, the sudden interest which he appeared to take in every look and movement of her sister.

“Can it be, Susan,” said she, suddenly breaking a silence which the anxiety of their mutual thoughts had occasioned—can it be, that he is indifferent to me? Can it be, that those are right, who accuse him of caprice, as well as want of principle? Did you hear what that tiresome Lord Sherbourne was whispering to me concerning him this evening, just as Eric was advancing to speak to me. He said that——— Oh! but I will not repeat it, it would be treason to entertain, for a moment, such thoughts as Lord Sherbourne does about him. Do tell me, Susan, honestly, and do not fear to trust me—do you believe that he loves me still?” “I cannot doubt it,” said Susan, while the quiver of her pale lip might have betrayed the deep emotion, with which she uttered words so painful to her heart, had not Margaret been too easily blinded by that passion, which, when unhappy, renders even the best natures selfish. Susan turned away, and appeared to be employed in arranging books on her table; and it was a relief. When Margaret spoke again, it was on the subject of Lord Sherbourne and Mr. Elliott; her language was by no means commendatory, and Susan thought her a little severe; for, deeply engaged as she had long been in the regulation

of her own impulses, she was more prepared than her sister for the exercise of that charity which thinketh no evil, but hopeth all things; and which, while it is not blind to the truth, restrains the expression of it; when to the detriment of another.

"I think, Margaret," said she, "you should make allowance for the weakness of a father's partiality, and the natural desire he feels, that his daughters should meet with that admiration, and the success in life, he thinks their due."

"Yes," said Margaret; "but is it not revolting to hear the language of flattery with which he assails my father's ears from hour to hour? Is it not hurtful to your feelings, to see him continually forcing Miss Sherbourne to his notice, and placing my father in an awkward position, by obliging him to utter compliments to her, while the poor girl is evidently as much the victim of her father's schemes? Did you not observe to-day, Susan, the pains he took, that Miss Sherbourne should be the person to accompany my father in the curricule, though he wished me to do so? Come, dear Susan, you must confess with all your charity, that his scheming is really odious." Susan smiled, for she could not entirely dissent from what her sister said; but merely observed, that she did not fear for the peace of mind of her dear father.

"No," said Margaret, laughing; "but what think you of your own, Susan? What say you to the ill-veiled attack of Miss Anne on the heart of Lord de Tracey? Do you not fear the result?"

"No, indeed," replied Susan, with readiness, which confirmed Margaret in the supposition, which was daily gaining ground in her mind, that there was already an understanding between Lord de Tracey and her sister. He had won Margaret, by degrees, to a better opinion of him. His unfeigned admiration of her dear sister—the submissive manner with which he bore her apparent coldness—although, as she thought,

deeply affecting his heart—the control which he had kept over his temper, and the pleasing style of his manners and conversation, added to the softened tone in which he now spoke of Mr. Hamilton, who at first had seemed the object of his dislike, had combined to raise him in Margaret's good opinion, and to cause her to unite with her father in wishing that Susan should, one day, return his affection. Margaret knew not what suffering she was inflicting on her sister, while she pleaded his cause, and eagerly and affectionately inquired whether she indeed felt no corresponding sentiment with his? On that very morning her father had spoken with Susan on the subject, and had expressed his high opinion of Lord de Tracey, in terms of undivided approval,—adding, how happy it would make him, should his dear Susan ever be able to return his affection.

True it was that Susan was determined to stifle a preference which she felt to be injurious to her sister's happiness. "But wherefore," thought she, "should I force myself to forget him, and still worse, to encourage the addresses of another, for whom I cannot feel sincere affection? Methinks the voice of duty, which compels me to relinquish my own wishes, demands not such an effort."

She did not utter these thoughts aloud; but Margaret saw that she was distressed, and struggling to conceal what was passing through her mind: she felt for her suffering, without understanding its cause; and, with an attempt to turn off what she had said, as a joke, although, in reality, feeling unusually depressed, she bade her good night, and Susan, had, at least, the satisfaction to think that her dear Margaret had lain down with a light heart.

Margaret was aroused, next morning, by the entrance of the housekeeper, who, smiling, put into her hands a letter, the bearer of which, she said, was waiting impatiently below for the reply. Margaret peru-

sed its contents with some difficulty; for neither idiom nor spelling being strictly correct, she could not easily decipher the strange hieroglyphics which were intended as letters; it ran thus:—

“Honored Lady,

Your handmaid, Mary Caimbel, residentee in Nierebach, her father's farm on his Honor's estate, humbly desires to cast herself with gratitude, on *your Honor's* clemency, and entreats you to accept her heartfelt thanks for the Laird Mr. Hamilton's wonderful kindness, in keeping back Mistress Sinclair and her son Dugald from facing the dangers of a tempestuous ocean, and leaving their bones in a foreign country. *Your Honor* heard from your poor petitioner the fact of her having given her promise of marriage to the said Dugald, and as his Honor Mr. Hamilton has so handsomely provided him with a bonny large farm, he wishes the wedding to be soon; and though your Honor's petitioner would not care to bide a year if she could serve your Honor in any way by it, yet she thinks for the poor old body's sake, it would be better there should be a strong active woman as soon as possible in the farm, to mind the kye and the poultry. Your Honor's handmaid humbly entreats the favor that you would be speaking to his Honor General Falkland, to ask leave that his Reverence Mr. Mac Farlane should espouse them, as they would be glad of his Reverence's blessing, and the other minister lives very far off.

“Your Honor's handmaid waits with affectionate duty to his Honor Mr. Hamilton, whom she never can forget, for all his humanity. She remains your Honor's petitioner, and grateful humble servant and handmaid.

MARY CAIMBEL.”

This subject was ever one of interest to Margaret's mind, for it was closely connected with her beloved,

and with the remembrance of his kindness; but the letter, which amused her from its style, gratified her in another point of view. Margaret was secretly pleased to find her name thus associated with his, in the mind of this simple peasant; and with more pleasure than she would have derived from the mere fact of witnessing her happiness, or than she even owned to herself, she sent for the happy blushing girl, who related, in her strange Gaelic idiom, the kind visit of "the beautiful laird," as she called him.

"Och!" said she, "did he not look like an angel, when he came out of Dugald's poor bit house, with his bonny gowden hair glancing to the sun; and then he did no' disdain to take the stirrup cup, as he mounted his bonny white mare, and drank happiness to Dugald and me. Surely he'll get the blessing, and your honor too." Margaret's eye glistened with joy, and her smile was not unremarked by the simple Mary; for, the unsophisticated heart can sometimes interpret the language of nature more surely than the worldly and the guileful.

Mary was detained at the Castle, to partake of some of the good things, which were ever liberally distributed to the poor in that hospitable mansion; and, in the mean time, Margaret repairing to her father, it was soon settled that Mr. Mac Farlane should join the hands of Dugald and Mary, and that the joyful occasion should be celebrated by a dinner and ball to all their friends, on the green before the Castle.

Mary departed with a light step, and lighter heart; nor was she less joyful, when Dugald, who anxiously awaited her return at the gate of the avenue, joined her on her walk homeward, and heard from her lips, the detail of the grand feast which was to be given in honor of their marriage.

This event was not one of indifference to the inmates of Walrond Castle. General Falkland was glad to promote innocent pleasure among his tenants;

and his daughters, with the liveliness natural to youth, were already busied in giving orders for the rural fête. The Miss Sherbournes thought with secret scorn, of a fête champêtre at such a retired place as Walrond Castle; for their ideas of such an amusement had been only derived from public déjeuners, near London; and their thoughts accustomed to range over bands of music, colored lamps, gravel walks, satin shoes, gauze bonnets, and tulle dresses, could not anticipate pleasure from a fête where the dancers were to be composed of Highland rustics, in addition to their own party. Of Lord de Tracey they began now to despair. Mr. Elliott they considered rather old, even to flirt with, upon finding their advances had been rather coolly met. Mr. Hamilton they both heartily disliked, because they saw the want of partiality to be quite mutual; and Mr. Richardson was accounted as nobody.

Miss Sherbourne, however, was determined to appear pleased in the prospect of it; not having yet quite abandoned the hope of becoming mistress of a place, which she might, one day, people with guests and amusements more accordant with her taste. Small as were their anticipations of pleasure, however, they determined, like other philosophers, to make the best of their prospects. Miss Anne was preserved from entire discouragement, by a fascinating primrose-colored dress which had not seen the light; one more effort might be made on the heart of Lord de Tracey; at any rate it was something to look forward to, and would break the routine of the long quiet mornings, and the reading and drawing which seemed to make the Miss Falklands so happy.

Their consultation on the subject of the fête was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Richardson, who, leaping rather than walking, made a hop, step, and jump, quite regardless of a small table in his way, when down came books, ink, pens and sundry sheets of cross-written paper, which the Miss Sherbournes

had been addressing to their several female correspondents.

"The Goth!" muttered Miss Sherbourne, with undisguised ill-temper.

"Oh! I beg pardon," exclaimed Mr. Richardson, "I beg pardon, my dear ladies," rising, and placing himself in a ludicrous attitude of mock humility and supplication: while the ink was flowing fast over the pink and yellow paper, and Miss Anne's choler began to rise also.

"What shall I do?"

"Why pick up the things," replied Miss Sherbourne, "and repair, if you can, the mischief you have done."

"O, yes! oh, yes!" said the good-natured Irishman, "with all my heart," at the same time huddling every thing together with his red awkward hands, till books, pens, paper and inkstand, partook of the dark coloring of the Miss Sherbourne's epistles and countenances; "but I'm so happy, I could jump over the moon. Have you heard of the ball?"

"Heard of it? Yes," replied the angry damsel, endeavoring to efface the ink from their letters.

"How charming," continued Mr. Richardson, who did not, or could not, believe so much ill-temper could arise from so trifling a misdemeanor—"how charming it will be! I shall perform my Vestris dance;" and then, with one leg uplifted, and arms outstretched, he began to execute the most grotesque evolutions. "Shall I tell you, ladies, why I am so overjoyed?" suddenly interrupting a pirouette; and stooping down, in his own natural manner, to whisper in Miss Sherbourne's unwilling ear—"shall I tell you? No, I won't; I love mystery; but I've a great deal of foresight, and you'll see if one wedding won't lead to another."

Miss Sherbourne became less angry; her thoughts reverted to the General.

Miss Anne was silent, but attentive; but while this silence reigned, Susan entered.

"What is this?" said she, in her gentle tone.

"Oh, my dear lady," said Mr. Richardson, "it wasn't me that did it, but my leg; I was just practising my Vestris entry, when down came that foolish table,—ink, books, and all."

"Oh, my poor Cowper!" said Susan; "but never mind," added she, as she saw Mr. Richardson's now really distressed face, "never mind, it cannot be helped."

"Mistress of herself, ladies!" said Mr. Richardson, bowing with the most absurd expression of satire to the Miss Sherbournes—"mistress of herself, when china falls!"

Miss Sherbourne flounced out of the room, and almost ran against Margaret, who, followed by Mr. Hamilton, was entering laden with Tartan shawls, colored stuffs, silk handkerchiefs, and ribbons, culled from the only shop in the village, where such finery was sold.

"I have been looking for you every where," said Margaret to her sister, "do come and help us, dear Susan, to choose a smart dress for the bride and the two old ladies. Mr. Hamilton had promised to assist us with his taste; and I think we shall prevail on Lord de Tracey to do so too," added she, with an arch look at her sister, who turned away to conceal that she could not join in the happy smiles of her sister. "Here is Mr. Richardson," continued Margaret, "quite ready; so we only want Mr. Elliott to make our conclave complete;—but no, we will not apply to him, for he is too fastidious to make a choice."

"Happy they," thought Eric, "who have not, on more important matters." His eye rested on Susan, with a look of inexpressible melancholy. Margaret's countenance fell. Susan perceived it, though not the occasion of it, for she dared not meet the eye that might then have revealed its secret. Turning to the shawls and ribbons, as if entirely occupied with them, she be-



can to unfold them, and continued quickly to interest Margaret on the subject. Mr. Hamilton affected to join in the discussion, and cloaks and gowns were soon selected for the bride and the old parents, and handkerchiefs for Dugald; and Margaret despatched them to their owners.

Just then General Falkland and Lord Sherbourne, followed by Lord de Tracey, entered; and the conversation turning on Highland marriages, Lord Sherbourne continued to prolong the theme till every one was tired of it. He described, with minuteness, the various ceremonies of the kind in other countries, till he carried them back to the ancient Jewish customs, in so tiresome a manner that Lord de Tracey yawned—Mr. Hamilton stole out of the room—and poor Susan was left alone to endure the irksome sound of his voice, and the fulsome flattery with which he continued to weary her.

"Pray, Miss Falkland, you, who are so deeply read in all these matters, can you tell me whether the Jewish brides wore veils at the betrothing, as well as at the marriage ceremony itself?"

Susan confessed her ignorance, but said she could procure him the information he wished from Home's work.

"Ah, yes," rejoined Lord Sherbourne, "you have, indeed, most wonderful powers of research: your mother, my dear lady, was a remarkable erudite as well as beautiful woman; and certain it is, her daughter partakes of the same taste for learning: the little I know myself just serves to show me my ignorance, and makes me admire those who excel in learning and research." Susan could not forbear smiling, while she sighed for an excuse to break up this fatiguing tête-à-tête: at length she proposed adjourning to the library, where Mr. Lazenby was busily engaged in writing the dedication of his treatise on his favorite theory; and she was not a little amused to find that

the dedication was to be addressed to herself. He was just reading it to Mr. Hamilton as she entered, and the expression of satisfaction depicted on the countenance of the listener, mingled with a strange look of mirth, was construed by her into the effect of the amusement he derived from Mr. Lazenby's absurdity.

Having found out the passage concerning Jewish brides, which Lord Sherbourne followed her to peruse, she had no further pretext for remaining where the ladies of the house seldom intruded of a morning; and therefore, leaving her two loquacious old guests to contend with one another who should best display the results of their learned cogitations, she joined her sister, who was preparing to walk with the Miss Sherbournes to the neighboring village. At dinner, Lord Sherbourne again renewed the theme, and contrived so successfully to collect his eldest daughter, General Falkland, and Susan, in the evening, and keep them apart from the rest of the society, that Miss Anne had full time to exert her powers of attraction on Lord de Tracey. The result was, that she left him with more hope, than she could have entertained, had she been aware how tired he was of her conversation, which Mr. Elliott declared to be a deuced nuisance, especially when a man had got hold of a new novel.

## CHAPTER XI.

"If those, who join in shepherds' sport,  
Gay dancing on the daisied ground,  
Have not the splendor of a court,  
Yet love adorns the merry round."

THOMSON— (*Alfred, a Tragedy.*)

MARY's wedding-day came. It was the first of June, and bright and beautiful as summer's day could shine. The landscape around Walrond Castle was enlivened by groups, in gay colored Tartans, winding through the avenue, and gradually collecting around a piper, who blew his gay summons with increasing diligence. Most of the happy rustics stood around him, unwilling to advance too near the Castle, till the bridal party should arrive, and the gentlemen and ladies come forth to invite their near approach. Some, more adventurous, loitered near the gate of the kirk,—one entrance of which was from the garden road; but it had been determined that the bride and the bridegroom should proceed through the Castle, and be joined by the rest, from without. At an early hour, Mary, decked in a white muslin gown, her hair fastened with a snood of blue ribbon, and her person partially covered by a bright red shawl, which she esteemed her greatest finery, was seen advancing, supporting her bridegroom's aged mother on the one side, and her own on the other. Two rosy bride's-maids followed, and one of them often turned to cast a sly look at Dugald, whose downcast eye and flushed cheek betrayed an emotion of bashfulness, which the great honor of being married in Walrond Castle, in the presence of so many fine folks, excited, more than any, fears respecting the effect he was to produce in his *braw* clothing. Of this he felt tolerably secure, as his eye fell on his bright red waistcoat, azure blue coat with metal buttons, and brilliant silk handkerchief, the gift of the young lady.

Mr. Mac Farlane's reverend voice hushed for a while every whisper, and fixed every wandering look,—while, with a peculiarly impressive manner, he called down the blessing of the Most High on the youthful couple. Many eyes streamed with tears of joy: but there were present two souls, who, while they sympathised in the general rejoicing, and united their wishes for happiness to the young pair, felt it no light task to contend with the emotions of their own hearts. Eric Hamilton, who was ever impetuous in his feelings, could scarcely control the expression of them: more deeply did the suffering heart of Susan feel the painful excitement; but not one trace of that emotion was to be discovered, by eyes that knew not her secret: yet, long after the bridal party was seated round the festive board, she was in the solitude of her own chamber, pouring out her heart upon her knees, while tears came to her relief with the softening influence of that gracious exercise. Margaret's kind eye missed her sister, and she ran to seek her.

“What can be the matter with my dearest Susan?” said she, putting her arms round her neck; “do not weep, dear, on this happy day: Lord de Tracey will be so unhappy, should he see you thus, and my dear father too. I know how much a religious ceremony\* always affects you; but come, love, we must not grace Mary's wedding-day with tears; though, I must confess that good Mr. Mac Farlane's prayer was truly touching. Come, come,” continued she, leading her sister by the arm, and, bounding beside her, they were soon amid the group of peasants who were loudly cheering the General, as they drank to his health, and that of the family, in many a draught of mountain dew, tossing their bonnets in the air. Dancing now began, and Mr. Hamilton led forth the bride to the joyous reel. Margaret and the “best man”

\* She did not conceive marriage to be merely a civil rite,—who that loves truly could wish to do so?

were their vis-a-vis. The peasants crowded around, to gaze with wonder on the lovely sylph-like form which glided on the turf with aërial grace; for even their untaught taste acknowledged the power of Margaret's beauty: their admiration was manifested by repeated cheers, as they beheld their native steps executed for the first time with as much grace as spirit. General Falkland gazed on her with all a father's fond partiality, and, turning to Lord de Tracey, asked whether he could not now relinquish his English prejudices, and acknowledge that the Scottish dances admitted of that elegance, which he had hitherto denied them. Lord de Tracey assented mechanically; for perhaps, of all the crowd assembled, his were the only eyes which turned not on Margaret. He was too painfully engaged in doubt, as to the subject of interest which seemed to absorb Susan, who, though she stood at his side, heeded but little the flattering incense which he offered to her. With sad and vacant smile she returned languid answers to his eager interrogatories; as if her thoughts were abstracted from all he could offer to their notice. Despairing of attracting her attention, he strove to excite her jealousy, by devoting himself to Miss Anne Sherbourne, although her countenance was, at that moment, anything but engaging, being vexed and out of humor at observing the General's eye following not her sister, but his own Margaret. At sight, however, of Lord de Tracey advancing to claim her hand for the next dance, her smile returned, and she gave a look of triumph at Susan, as she passed before her.

Hamilton led the bride to one of the seats which were placed around the green, and was soon at the side of Susan. How did her heart throb with irrepressible pleasure, that Lord de Tracey was no longer there to impede the converse of one so much dearer. In the moment of the uncontrollable emotion, even her sister was forgotten, and she who was wont to analyse every

thought with a jealous scrutiny, was at that instant lost to every other impression, save the joy of hearing him address her, of watching the grace which pervaded his liveliest movements, and the sparkling animation which lent interest to his most trivial expressions. He told her all that had passed between the bride and himself, and they smiled together at the simple artless manner in which her happiness was demonstrated, and how she had wished the same bright day might dawn for his wedding. "Ah, Susan," added he, while his eye melted into tenderness, and gazing upon her, "that day will never shine on me." Again he looked, for she was silent; a blush of unwonted brightness mantled on her lily cheek; again it resumed a more than ordinary paleness: the thought flashed across his mind, "Perhaps De Tracey is not to her what I have imagined." And could it be possible? surrounded as he was by those entirely occupied by their own amusement, unobserved by any of their own party—for all, even General Falkland and Mrs. Stewart, were joining the dance. The courage inspired by such a hope, for the first time dawning on him, seemed suddenly to inspire his tongue with a language not to be restrained. The ardour of his passion, and the vehemence of his natural temper burst forth in exclamations, which, had they been rightly understood, might have saved both from much future misery.

But Susan, possessed with the idea that Hamilton's heart had long been given to her sister, imagined that all the regrets he uttered for time and fortune misspent, and talents missapplied, were for Margaret's sake,—that all the vows he made of yet proving the strength of his good resolutions, were poured into her ear, that they might be repeated to her sister.

Eric marked the coldness with which Susan with difficulty appeared to listen to him; it was indeed a hard penance for her to hear from those lips, feelings which, had she dreamed they were breathed for her, would have filled her drooping heart with transport.

When, again, Lord de Tracey joined her, and complained how drearily that day had passed for him, she rejoined, in the genuine language of her heart's feeling, before she was well aware how she had answered him — "that it had, indeed, been such to her also." Joy sparkled in his eyes, and illuminated his whole countenance; nor did that look escape the eyes of Margaret, who whispered as she passed — "Speak always thus to him, dear Susan; see how handsome you can make him!"

It was almost beyond the utmost effort of her fortitude, at that moment, to answer her sister, while, for that sister's sake, she was struggling to stifle the strongest affection of her human breast. Margaret's words, unwittingly spoken, sounded, at that moment, like the language of triumph over ruined happiness and a broken heart. But not long did such a feeling linger in the heart of one whose high resolve had not been made in the confidence of presumptuous and mere human unassisted strength: surely higher unseen intelligences wait around the path of the virtuous and self-denying, to support them along the thorny path which they are called to tread; and many a sweet, though humble flower, lurks beneath, exhaling its sweetness around the weary pilgrim, reminding him of that pure sphere in which his painful progress is to terminate. In such a light did Margaret's gladness, the next moment, appear to her noble-minded sister, as she watched the innocent cheerfulness of her aspect.

Such was the simple happiness of Mary and Dugald, as they were led away in triumph to the sounds of their rustic music, when the feast was concluded; and with such a spirit did she listen to the blessings poured down on her dear father's head, as the rural crowd dispersed, and left the green in possession of him, his family and guests, who lingered to watch the gay processions moving down the avenue with merry and thankful hearts: a painter might have decked his canvass with

no mean portraiture, had he seen the General's venerable form standing with dignified and benevolent expression to receive their parting salutations. Margaret, overcome with fatigue, had sunk upon the grass; and her long golden ringlets fell upon her snowy bosom and pure white drapery, with an air of careless grace surpassing in beauty the most studied attitude.

Susan leaned upon her father's shoulder, musing on the happiness of others, till her sweet countenance, partook of the placid expression of her thoughts. The rest of the party clustered in a group at a distance, and here and there the figure of an old peasant, in sober colored garb, whose slower pace delayed his step from the retiring crowd, gave effect, by contrast, to the gaily dressed party of more elevated rank.

But not long did they remain in that position. General Falkland's daughters feared his catching cold; when the evening dew began to fall; and, yielding to their entreaties, he re-entered the saloon, whither the rest of the party soon followed him.

It was a sad termination to this mirthful morning, when, entering her sister's room, just as dinner was announced, Margaret found her stretched on the floor, senseless. Margaret had never beheld any one thus; and in the first agony of her mind, forgetful of every thing save Susan's illness, she rushed into the room where all the company were assembled, calling loudly for help. Hamilton was the first to obey her summons, and ere the rest of the party arrived, assisted her to place Susan on a couch. On beholding her pale lifeless form, Hamilton could not restrain her agonised expression of his feelings, and, in terms of endearment, which he would not have dared to breathe, when she could listen to them, he poured forth his groans and lamentations. Such was the distraction of Margaret, that the sounds fell unheeded on her ear,—but they recalled Susan to life.



Exhausted by the conflicting emotions she had endured during the day, a faintness had seized her, and before she was able to call for assistance, she had become insensible. Scarcely conscious of the import of her lover's expression, yet distressed at witnessing his anxiety, she had yet power feebly to re-assure him, and implore him to retire. He was therefore forced to obey her father's injunctions, that she might be left in quiet, and, joining the rest of the party, to return to the dining room. A messenger was despatched for medical advice, and her father sat down with Margaret to await the result.

This was but the beginning of a dangerous fever, brought on by excess of feeling, constantly restrained, but which was attributed by the General and her sister, as well as by the medical attendant, to having caught cold, after being over-heated in dancing. Susan was thankful to hear such was the assigned cause of her illness, and much did it mitigate her sufferings, that these dear ones remained ignorant of the grief which preyed upon her; but the continued necessity of concealing her mind's disease, retarded that recovery so anxiously desired by her friends.

In the mean time, Lord Sherbourne, who was not one to linger where self, and those connected with that all-engrossing object, were overlooked, departed with his wife and daughters, hoping, as he said, from the bottom of his heart, that this illness would not long delay the pleasure he looked forward to, of meeting them in town; whilst he secretly desired that Susan might improve her convalescence in the rural shades, far from a destructive competition with his daughters. Old Mr. Lazenby and Mrs. Stewart were unfeignedly sorry that their dear friends should suffer so much anxiety: the former offered to continue his work in the library of Walrond Castle, and the latter to leave the progress of her sons' lessons entirely to the care of Mr. Dickenson, while she nursed dear Susan: but the

General declined Mr. Lazenby's kind offer, because his loquacity was more than he felt equal to; and Margaret gently refused Mrs. Stewart's obliging services, because she knew that her gruff voice and thick-soled shoes could scarcely be grateful to the ear of an invalid. Mr. Elliott regretted much that several of his numerous engagements tore him from the scene of his anxiety, and Mr. Richardson was forced to follow his leader; but the tear which stole down his red nose was not forced, as he gratefully proffered his thanks for all the kindness received, and joined his unsophisticated expression of good will, to the more fluent, but less sincere, of his more polished friend. Lord de Tracey and Mr. Hamilton lingered: the former spoke with so much respectful tenderness to General Falkland of his beloved Susan, and entreated, with so much earnestness, to be permitted to remain till she should be, at least, convalescent, that her father could not refuse him.

Eric Hamilton, who was always esteemed one of the family, stayed as a matter of course; nor was it surprising to Margaret, that he should look so pale and wan and dejected when her sister was suffering, and herself so deeply distressed.

## CHAPTER XII.

"An honest man here lies at rest,  
As e'er God with his image blest;  
The friend of man, the friend of truth,  
The friend of age, and guide of youth."

BURNS.

IT was not without an anxious, though scarcely definable foreboding, that Evelyn saw Mr. Somerville depart, while his daughter became established as an inmate of Ormiston Hall; certain it is, that, apart from any superstitious trust in feelings which may arise from natural constitution, or from the combination of outward circumstances, those who have watched the state of their minds, previous to the occurrence of any calamitous event, have remarked that there was often a weight upon their spirits, for which they could not account by any past circumstance, and which seemed with a still voice to warn them of coming evil. May not such feelings be given by that merciful Power, which has respect to the weakness of frail mortality, and which, with more than parental tenderness, would warn his poor children of the hour of trial, that they may not meet it unprepared? Even though the awakened mind may not be enabled to trace distinctly the features of the coming evil, yet, to every well-ordered spirit, there will be a degree of watchfulness over temper and conduct, in proportion of danger. In such a frame of mind did Evelyn spend the long gloomy day which succeeded that of Mr. Somerville's departure. Much had he struggled against the bitter sense of disappointment which had blighted his early dream of happiness; and the effort had so far succeeded, that his regrets were at least kept in abeyance through that Providence in which he had ever been wont to put his trust. He gratefully acknowledged, that though na-

ture's feelings were not in this respect conquered, yet they were at least subdued; and while he employed each hour in the fulfilment of affectionate or charitable duty, he had a comforting sense of possessing, at least, peace of mind, if not the happiness which he had sighed for: but when he looked at the frail and delicate being who was now intrusted to the care of a very old man,—when he considered the distance which at every moment separated her father still further from her,—he could not but entertain an anxious desire that the business which had called him from thence might soon be terminated, and that she might be restored safely to his parental care. There was one circumstance which greatly added to this desire—the delicacy natural to so honorable and right-minded a character as Evelyn's, upon the first suspicion of a growing partiality towards himself, on the part of this interesting girl. Although modest to a sensitive degree, her simple, unaffected manners betrayed, at times, unwillingly, the emotions which filled her heart. Evelyn knew not how deep a root the attachment had taken in so short a time, but there was enough in the bare suspicion of such a possibility to fill his upright mind with apprehension, and to arm him doubly against the chance of deceiving her by fallacious hopes. Too well did he know and feel the misery of such disappointment, and too much did he prize the delicacy and honor of woman, willingly to permit so pure-minded a girl as Caroline to commit herself, by the betrayal of unrequited feelings: it was, perhaps, owing to the reserve which he felt himself called upon to maintain, from the moment of her father's departure, particularly in the absence of his uncle, that poor Caroline's attachment became more manifest, by the anxiety which Evelyn's altered manner occasioned her.

The health of Lord Ormiston became daily weaker, and he could no longer take those drives with his favorite Caroline, which left Evelyn at liberty to enjoy

exercise by himself, or the privacy of his own apartment. But, whenever he offered to relieve her of her watchful care over his uncle, and entreated that she would go out alone in the carriage, rather than confine herself so much to a sick dark chamber, she would cast so reproachful and so sad a look upon him, that he was fain to turn away and absent himself, rather than encourage, by his presence, that affection which he perceived only with unmingled regret. At other times, his uncle would insist on his accompanying Caroline in her walk; and he could not, without absolute rudeness, refuse compliance. Then, how did her soft smile and joyous expression pierce his heart with un-availing regret! and how did his pensive looks and listless replies awaken in her young and guiltless heart a deeper interest! She sometimes rallied him on his sadness; then, with a tenderer tone, implored him to make her the confidant of his cares—assuring him how strictly she should guard the trust.

It was while walking one fine summer's evening on the terrace, that Caroline, observing a more than ordinary depression on Evelyn's spirits, strove to arouse him by every means which her feeling heart dictated. She had gathered a nosegay of various colored heart's-ease, and while twining them together so as to mingle their purple and white and yellow leaves, as she deemed most harmoniously, she placed them in Evelyn's hand, and with a faint blush, spoke the expressions of her simple heart, wishing his might be in unison with the name of that sweet flower. Evelyn smiled at the commonplace sentiment, which seemed, for the first time, to have struck this artless girl as something delightful: but his attention was, at that instant, diverted by the voice of Gilpin, Lord Ormiston's servant, who was calling loudly to him, to return to the house. His master had been suddenly seized by numbness in his limbs, and had lost his speech, Evelyn flew to his couch, where the faithful attendant had

already placed him, and messengers were speedily despatched for medical aid. Caroline, who had followed him with as much speed as her strength would admit, reached the drawing-room with difficulty, and finding it empty, and an air of confusion around the sofa, from whence Lord Ormiston had been taken, and with an indefinable dread of ill, though she could hardly surmise the nature of it, sank breathless at the door. As she recovered, she looked around her, as if the inanimate objects could reveal the tale of woe which her fears foreboded; but, unable yet to rise, she vainly struggled against her weakness, and again sank back with a despairing sensation of helplessness. Then did a sense of her folly, in encouraging hopes which had never been met by return, dawn upon her mind in full and mortifying reality. She felt something cold beneath her hand;—it was the nosegay she had given Evelyn, which had fallen as he ran to obey the sad summons. "He has cast my flowers away," thought she; "they are already withered, crushed beneath my hand; now an emblem of my departed peace of mind, never to return. The grave," she said aloud, "the grave shall be my rest!"—As she spoke, a footstep advanced.

Evelyn was beside her: the shock he had received by his uncle's sudden attack, had fixed an unnatural flush upon his cheek, which had succeeded to the paleness of alarm; he knew that Caroline was yet ignorant of what had happened, for the whole household were gathered in the hall, which led to Lord Ormiston's apartment, anxiously awaiting the first report of their dear master's condition. Lord Ormiston had spoken; and as soon as he had recognised Evelyn, had inquired for Caroline, and eagerly asked why she was not also beside him? "Let her come," he said, "to receive my parting blessing."

It was a sad task to Evelyn, to break the intelligence to one whom he already found in so weak a situation;

but the thoughts in which Caroline had been engaged had armed her with a resolution and strength which astonished him. She scarcely accepted his aid, as she arose from the attitude of prostration, into which her weakness had thrown her; and with an assurance that she should betray no emotion at sight of Lord Ormiston's altered appearance, (which she strictly fulfilled,) she followed Evelyn with a firm step to the sick chamber.

"Grant me but one boon," said she, in a low but decided voice, as she drew near to the half open door of Lord Ormiston's room—"let me be with him, to nurse and attend him to the last. My days are numbered, nor can any circumstance hasten or prevent the event: let me be with him to the end."

Evelyn knew not how to reply; but, pressing her hand with an affectionate warmth, which the sadness and solemnity of that moment warranted, they walked together to the side of the sick man's couch.

"I am here," said Caroline, taking his hand with a gentleness which could not startle or alarm. "Thank you for the permission."

"Blessings on you, my sweet girl!" said the kind old man, returning her pressure, with a grasp so different from that of the lively and healthful, that those who feel it from the hand of age and sickness, at such an hour, experience a sensation of mingled awe and veneration, such as can be better felt than described. Caroline had often stood by the bed of death;—she had been called, in early years, to hear a mother's last blessing, and since then her feet had never shunned to cross the threshold of poverty and sickness. Naturally weak and timid as she was, she had looked on the glassy eye, and marked the damp of death steal over the faded cheek, without alarm; for she experienced, at such seasons, the blessedness of those meditations, which, soaring far beyond the frail emblems of decaying mortality, bestow a firmness, which others, endow-

ed with more natural courage, might have sought in vain. The gates of heaven seemed to her eye of faith to open before her, while the world and all its dearest joys far receded. She knelt beside her aged friend in prayer, for she saw that he would soon be called away, and each moment was precious. Silently she united in spirit with his devout ejaculations, and the conviction of his eternal salvation calmed her gentle spirit, when, after a few hours he sank, with the serenest expression of inward peace, into his last sleep. His parting words were blessings on Evelyn, on Mr. Somerville, and Caroline; then, turning to his sorrowing dependants, he commended them to Evelyn, and seemed no longer to have an earthly care or thought.

Who that has passed from the chamber of death, where they have realized the nothingness of all worldly anxieties,—where they have seen the utter worthlessness of all earthly supports, to afford either hope or consolation in the hour of extreme need,—but will feel the constraining power of faith and prayer; and, while yet the prospect of that eternity, to which they have seen a soul depart, is open before them, will not seek, upon their knees, that grace which only can give strength to travel on in hope to the end of the journey? Happy they, who, at such an hour, feel no disquieting dread for those who have gone before; but who, with overflowing hearts, can scarcely heed the tears which natural regrets call forth, while blessing the Almighty for his saints departed, and can arise with serene minds to pursue their steadfast way wherever Providence shall lead!

In such a spirit did the gentle Caroline lie down that night to rest, after she had written the simple detail of the day's sad events to her beloved father. Tears flowed fast as she penned the words, for dearly had she prized the almost parental tenderness with which that good old man had loved her; and, since



she had learnt to connect Evelyn with every feeling, there was an additional claim on her warm and affectionate heart: she felt that the link was broken which bound them together; it was this which most inspired her resignation, as she dwelt upon the mournful theme; yet exhausted nature claimed repose, and she had not long bedewed her pillow with tears, when she sank into as calm a sleep as a child upon its mother's breast.

Among the many painful reflections which, after the solemnities of the first shock of the last awful scene had subsided, crowded on the mind of Evelyn, not the least of his anxieties was occasioned by the situation of Caroline Somerville. Her venerable protector was taken away; her father was distant many hundred miles, and much delay might occur in the period of his return, owing to the frequent irregularity of the posts in this retired situation. He knew that it was not in the midst of crowds only that the world's suspicion might be excited, for far and wide will the eye of calumny reach; and he dreaded lest the fame of his amiable young friend should suffer by her remaining in the house, of which he was now the sole master: nor could he refrain from speculating upon what might be the judgment of those whose opinion he valued far beyond that of the world's. Yet, how could he leave Ormiston Hall at such a time? After the last sad duties had been paid to his uncle's remains, could he be justified in intrusting Caroline to the care of servants only? No; it was impossible: yet not without uneasiness did he come to such a conclusion: though fully aware of the nature of his own feelings, he could not mistake what hers had been, and he dreaded not only rendering her still more unhappy, but also exciting in the mind of her father an unfavorable opinion of his conduct towards this guileless and interesting girl.

When, therefore, he had fulfilled those duties which called for his immediate attention, he addressed a let-

ter to Mr. Somerville, informing him of the melancholy event that had taken place, and mentioning, as a matter of course, his expectation of seeing Mr. Somerville, in a very short time, even if he was not able to attend the funeral.

Three days gloomily succeeded. Poor Caroline, while, in the solitude of her own chamber, had ample leisure to meditate on the past, so replete to her with mournful interest, seemed, during the last three months, which had passed to her so speedily, to have existed years; for her whole thoughts were concentrated in the result of this short period. She dwelt with fond remembrance on every look and tone of him who now studiously avoided her. She understood not the motive, but she deplored his absence. She shrank from the prospect of those future regrets, which could only be insured by a continuance of the intimacy which had already proved so fatal to her peace of mind. She thought but of the present; and as she sat gazing from her window on the bright flowers, which bloomed as gaily as in the days of her past enjoyment, she sighed, to think that she no longer prized them, since he was no longer by her side; and longed to hear his step, or see but his shadow pass over the walk, where he used daily to wander with her; then she would endeavor to read, but the sound of a footstep, or the closing of a door, in the corridor, filled her with the thought that it might possibly be his step, and her eye wandered over the page, and her hand sank upon her knee;—when, again, the mournful silence which reigned through the house, left her to the painful consciousness of her solitude. Twice every day she received, indeed, a message of kind inquiry after her health, which she expected with an anxiety only to be understood by those who have known the thrill which the name beloved excites, when even in the commonest expressions of courtesy; and she could not fail to remark, that it was not the unassisted attention of do-

mestics which supplied her table with those dishes which had been usually preferred by her changeful appetite, or filled her windows with those flowers whose fragrance was not too powerful for her delicate nerves: she could not but remark these gentle unremitted cares; but still she saw him not—still she heard not his voice; and she feared, at last, that she dared not utter her fears to any of the servants who waited upon her, that his grief might have affected his health; and the thought preyed upon her, till her cough grew hourly worse, and the hectic flush on her cheek gave evidence of the fever which ran through her veins and consumed her strength.

On the eighth day after Lord Ormiston's death, she received her father's answer to the sad announcement she had made to him. Fond and endearing as his letters had always been, the contents of this one went most forcibly to her heart; and as the tears streamed from her eyes, she felt the blessedness of possessing such a parent, with so grateful a sentiment of gratitude, that every other thought faded away, and she resolved to devote her life to repay his kindness and promote his happiness, unmindful of her own. She had scarcely laid her letter down, when a gentle knock at the door arrested her attention. It was Gilpin—her dear friend's aged servant. She stretched out her hand kindly to him, and they were silent. He first spoke. "I come, Madam, to inform you, that my Lord wishes to see you for a few moments, if quite convenient to yourself."

Caroline felt startled; she had not heard him mentioned by his title, and her thoughts were bewildered.

The good old servant fancied that she dreaded the meeting. "His Lordship bade me say, that he would not trouble you, Madam, did you feel unequal to seeing him this morning."

Caroline assured him how gladly she accepted his offer, and in a few moments Evelyn stood before her.

It was the first time they had met since they had listened together, by the dying bed, to the blessings which were called down on their heads, with tender earnestness, by the lips of their departed friend. The mournful scene was renewed before them; and, with hands clasped together, they joined their tears of united sympathy to the memory of one so justly beloved. Evelyn saw in her only the friend and solace of his revered uncle; but in the depths of her struggling heart there was a sensation of happiness from the sight of so dear an object, which outweighed the memory of the dead; and in many an after day, the remembrance of that moment of affectionate sympathy endeared him still more to her. He spoke not of the mournful ceremony which he was about to attend, but his dress seemed to declare it, and when he arose to take leave of her, she inquired whether she might be permitted to enter the chamber which overlooked the entrance gate, or, at least, gaze on the funeral procession?

Evelyn entreated her to refrain from such an excitement to her feelings; but she would not be denied.

"A few hours, perhaps, may bring Mr. Somerville," said Evelyn, "and then, I trust, you will be more at ease." Then, begging her to ask for all that could minister to her comfort, he bade her farewell, and hastened to join the sad procession, of which, among many mourners, he was, indeed, the chief.

It was not without the deepest emotion that Caroline witnessed the remains of her beloved friend borne from the threshold, which she had trod so often with him in days gone by—from that roof, where she had contributed to the gladness of his benevolent smile, and where she had so often listened to the tones of his gentle voice, breathing out kindness with every word he spoke,—now for ever hushed and silent in his narrow home. Evelyn was right in advising her to refrain from so sad a spectacle; for when she re-

turned to her chamber, she sank exhausted on her couch: nor was it without much increase of pain and fever that she arose on the following day. Her father, notwithstanding every exertion, did not arrive till two days after the funeral, and she had rallied, or, at least, had seemed to rally, for she made an effort to appear composed; and notwithstanding all she had gone through, her health had not suffered. Again she enjoyed the society of Evelyn, while her father's presence removed the restraint which his sense of duty had imposed. But who has not experienced the gloom which prevails around the board, where the one is withdrawn, to whom all had looked with mingled respect and affection? Who has not felt the mournful silence, with difficulty broken, by trivial observations, and where the nature of the scene impedes conversation, on the subject nearest the heart? There are few, even among the young, who have not known the sadness of such an hour; there are few so thoughtless, that they cannot recal the impression made by the solemnity of the time: but the world, with all its cares and anxieties, again calls for activity; and some soon mingle in its noise and in its mirth, and the voice of reflection is suspended.

Not so was it with the three friends now assembled; and they were destined in a few days to part, but not to forget.

Mr. Somerville's eyes became, at length, open to the danger which lurked beneath the present enjoyment of Caroline's intimacy with Evelyn; and while he entirely exonerated him from blame, he resolved to remove her from a fascination, which he perceived to be destructive of her peace.

### CHAPTER XIII.

POOR Caroline spent a sleepless night previous to the day of her departure from Ormiston. Each trifling circumstance which had attended her late intercourse with the object of her affection was renewed to her mind, with all the vividness which memory lends to past enjoyment in the hour of regret; and she could scarcely realize the painful thought of that separation which awaited her on the morrow. Vainly she strove to repel the conviction of the comparative-indifference he had evinced towards her; for, young and inexperienced as she was, she did not dream that his affections could possibly be fixed on a person who did not return his love; she deemed it impossible that another could be preferred to Evelyn, should he have bestowed on any so rich a boon; and her thoughts fondly lingered around the hope, that time might yet restore him to her society. Thus did she spend the feverish wakeful hours which intervened between the moment she bade him good night, and that on which they again met at breakfast the next day.

Evelyn also looked depressed, and the fact was some consolation to the sorrowing Caroline; who could scarcely refrain from tears, when he addressed her with words of kindness—words which, uttered by lips beloved, are far more touching to the wounded heart, than those of unkindness. Who has not experienced the difficulty of concealing the heart's emotion at such moments? A short interval of bustle succeeded to the almost silent repast. Evelyn and Mr. Somerville were, meanwhile, conversing in a low voice in the room adjoining; and Caroline seized this moment to write some verses, which she had often loved to repeat when the sentiments they expressed were

understood, but of which, till that moment, she scarcely felt in their full strength; then, hastily gathering a branch of roses, which flung its fragrant blossoms on the parterres near the window where she was sitting, she placed the flowers beside the verses on the table, where they might meet Evelyn's eye.

The bitter moment arrived. It was well for poor Caroline that the many minor calls for attention, incident to the commencement of a journey, gave her opportunity to summon all her fortitude, and to speak the parting word with assumed composure. She hoped that her father would attribute her emotion, in a great measure, to the remembrance of their departed friend; for how could she confess, even to such a father, the humiliating truth, of her having bestowed her affections unsought? The native dignity of woman came to her relief; and, though her poor heart beat to suffocation, she contrived to say farewell, with something like composure; nor did she yield to tears till her father fell asleep; and then, unobserved, she gave loose to her sorrows: nor was it without an oppressive sense of melancholy, that Evelyn watched the receding vehicle that bore his two amiable friends from Ormiston Hall, and left him without one sympathising ear to listen to the mournings of his lonely hours, without one heart to feel what he could not have expressed, but which he hoped had been understood by those congenial minds. "Surely," said he to himself, "Miss Somerville must have perceived that long before my uncle's death, my spirits were depressed with an untold sorrow; surely that amiable girl will not indulge a feeling detrimental to her peace of mind; or how can I feel absolved, in being the cause, however innocent, of any suffering to her?" He looked around; the large empty chambers, of which he was now the sole possessor, filled his mind with a sense of his loneliness; the lofty trees, which waved their leafy branches in thick and verdant mas-

ses, far as eye could reach, the sunny terrace, which glowed beneath the splendour of a summer's morning, rich in all the variegated brightness of the beautiful flowers with which it was ornamented—the laughing smile of gaudy day, which seemed to pervade all nature,—struck him with a deeper impression of the comparative sadness and desolation of his heart: possessed with all that rank and fortune could bestow, he experienced a deeper gloom than he had ever known in days when the slender pittance inherited from his father was his sole possession, but when a bright hope irradiated his prospects, and animated the enjoyments of the present. He threw himself on a chair by his writing table, with the intention of addressing his dear friend, General Falkland, to whom he had but written a few hurried words in the first moments of his distress. The kind and sympathizing reply which lay before him was dated “London,” and a thousand conflicting thoughts, which the knowledge of Margaret's situation there excited, arrested his pen, and he remained musing for some time, in sad mental abstraction.

As he arose from his reverie, the flowers left by Caroline attracted his attention, and the page beneath them, written in characters which he had seldom seen, but which he recognised to be her hand writing. He sighed mournfully, as he perused the following lines, for they echoed the feelings of his own heart; whilst he grieved to think that they should express those of hers:—

FROM THE TAUNTON NEWSPAPER.

“ Oh ! 't is one scene of parting here,  
Love's watchword is ‘farewell;’  
And almost starts the following tear,  
Ere dried the last that fell.

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NOTE BY THE EDITOR.—These lines deserve to be acknowledged, from whosoever pen they proceed, they are beautiful.



'Tis but to know that one most dear  
Grows needful to the heart,  
And straight a voice is muttering near,  
Imperious—' Ye must part !'

Oft, too, we doom ourselves to grieve  
For wealth or glory rove ;  
But say, can wealth or glory give  
Aught that can equal love ?

Life is too short thus to bereave  
Existence of its spring ;  
Or e'en for one short hour to leave  
Those to whose hearts we cling.

Count o'er the hours whose happy flight  
Is shared with those we love ;  
Like stars amid a stormy night,  
Alas ! how few they prove !

Yet they concentrate all the light  
That cheers our lot below ;  
And thither turns the weary sight,  
From this dark world of wo.

But happiest they, whose gifted eye  
Above this world can see,  
And those diviner realms descry,  
Where partings cannot be :

Who, with one changeless Friend on high,  
Life's varied paths have trod ;  
And soar to meet beyond the sky,  
At the ransom'd and their God."

The religious expression of the concluding stanzas absolved Caroline, in his mind, from all imputation of indelicacy, in laying before him the language of her heart ;—a heart which, in spite of her native modesty, and his endeavors to blind himself, had already betrayed itself to him. His thoughts followed her with mournful contemplation, and still the page was

blank before him in which he intended to write to his friend, when the day was already far advanced, and the servant put into his hand a packet of letters. Many of these were but the commonplace compliment of a sympathy slightly felt, if felt at all, on his late loss. These he carelessly glanced over, till opening one to which he read the signature, "Sherbourne," a name on one of its long and closely written pages caught his eye, which instantly rivetted his attention. Newspapers, letters, flowers, and verses were pushed aside, and he began eagerly to peruse an effusion, of which the subject alone, not the writer, could have excited so much interest : it ran as follows :—

" My dear young friend,

" You will, I am sure, feel no hesitation in believing with what deep and heartfelt concern I heard the news of your lamented uncle's death. It was, doubtless, but the transplanting of a worthy soul to a more congenial sphere ; and in such a light, the reasonableness and justness of a mind such as yours will have regarded the removal of that excellent person from a world in which he was so eminently useful.

I need not now dwell on the encomiums of which my mind suggests the utterance, since you are aware that I had, in early life, the distinguished advantage of Lord Ormiston's particular acquaintance and friendship. My studies were, in a great measure, directed by his guidance and advice, and my youthful pleasures, enhanced by his countenance and pleasing society. May I venture to add, that I trust my advancing years may boast the renewed happiness of an intimacy with one, who, I make no doubt, from what I have observed, is so eminently calculated to supply the vacancy which has been left in society, by the demise of his worthy uncle ? It is too much to hope, that you will have sufficiently recovered your spirits to appear in town this season, when my house will always be open

to receive you, and where, I flatter myself, you may meet many whose minds will be congenial with your own? Lady Sherbourne unites with me in the expression of this wish most heartily.

“ You will not, perhaps, be surprised to hear of two marriages, which are much talked of: indeed, I make no doubt that, ere now, General Falkland has apprised you of them. His eldest daughter is very shortly to be united to Lord de Tracey, whom, I think you are acquainted with. Those who are mindful only of worldly advantages, consider this a very fortunate alliance; but those who, like myself, regard sound principle and religious faith as the chief ingredients of domestic peace, cannot but tremble for the result, since his Lordship is better known as a lucky man on the turf, and has shone more in the circles of dissipation, than as one likely to promote the comfort of a home fireside. Miss Margaret, her sister, has been, however, still less fortunate in her choice; and it is the greater pity, as she is, you know, everywhere so highly spoken of, and equally admired for beauty, as for grace of mind and person:—she has fixed her affections on that wild young fellow, Hamilton, who was at Walrond Castle when I last had the pleasure of visiting there. The General has reluctantly yielded his consent, and the weddings are, I understand, to take place in a week or two. The day is fixed; but as I indulge but little curiosity in these matters, except in as far as they may interest my correspondents in the country, I have not ascertained the truth of that report.

“ I never saw London so full and so stupid. My girls can scarcely be prevailed upon to go out of an evening. The fact is, their tastes and pursuits are quite of a different order from that of the ordinary run of young ladies: however, I could wish they mingled a little more with those of their own age. Anne cannot cease speaking of that romantic spot where we had last the pleasure of seeing you; she is certainly

devoted to the country, and looks quite pale from the confinement in this smoky town. My eldest girl is pretty well. I should ask them whether they have no message for you, as I know they deeply sympathised in your late loss; but their mother has taken them to a morning concert of sacred music, which they prefer above all other recreation, as more congenial with their views and feelings, than those of a lighter order. I must conclude, being expected to join a meeting of the Royal Society. Pray let us hear very soon from you, as you must be aware how truly anxious we shall be, till we learn that your health has not suffered from your just regrets. Believe me, my dear young friend, with sentiments of the most genuine friendship and esteem, your sympathising friend,

“SHERBOURNE.”

As Lord Sherbourne folded this letter, he flattered himself that, in this hypocritical tirade, he had precisely met the feelings of him whom he addressed, and that the tone of friendly concern which he had assumed, would serve totally to blind Lord Ormiston as to the end he had in view. For the moment he had heard of Evelyn's accession to the title and large property of his deceased uncle, his ambition was awakened to secure the prize for one of the members of his own family; and as he had not yet dismissed all hopes of obtaining General Falkland's hand for his eldest daughter, he considered Lord Ormiston as the next best object on which to fix his regards for Miss Anne. There was a degree of truth in the intelligence which he communicated, with regard to the rumored marriages of the Miss Falklands; for the world, busy though it be, with its selfish speculations, is ever ready to circulate its rumors concerning an expected marriage, especially if the parties have proved an interference to its own views; and in such a light were these beautiful girls regarded by many a worldly parent, such as

Lord Sherbourne: but he was quite concerned that he wrote what was false, when he spoke in so decided a manner of Margaret's proposed union with Mr. Hamilton, for the narrowness of his circumstances was well known; yet it was received by the despairing Evelyn with perfect credence, and, almost in a state of insensibility, he sank in breathless agony. Much as he had striven to school his mind to such a possibility, now that the blow had fallen, it seemed more than his strength of mind could sustain; and, in all the weakness of despair, he hid his face in his hands, and sobbed aloud.

The faithful attendant of his late uncle entered, while he was in this condition, and stood by him, ere he was aware of the presence of any one. "I beg your pardon, my Lord, but I heard your voice as I passed through the hall, and I feared you were ill;—can I bring you any thing?"

At the presence of this good old man, Evelyn revived; he grasped his hand with nervous bewilderment.

"No!" replied he—"no; nothing—nothing;"—then, hastily gathering his letters in his hands, he rushed from the room, and found himself wandering through the wood which stretched behind his house, before he had collected his senses sufficiently to dwell on the cause of his emotion with any thing like calmness. The soft air seemed insensibly to revive him, and he sat down to consider how he should be enabled to bear so heavy a stroke, he then felt a doubt, for the first time, as to the truth of Lord Sherbourne's intelligence, since General Falkland had not mentioned the subject in his last letter of condolence, and he stopped to examine those letters which his distress of mind had hitherto caused him to neglect, in the expectation of finding some allusion to Lord Sherbourne's intelligence. The result was more mournfully convincing: one of them was from a young acquaintance, who seldom failed to insert any news of that description; and

in one of these, Evelyn read the confirmation of his worst fears. Those hopes which, till that day, had never wholly been laid aside, now gave place to hopelessness, and long and deep was his anguish. There is something in the nature of such a disappointment, which removes the voice of consolation farther from our hearts than, perhaps, any other species of misfortune; it is a bitterness which the heart that suffers alone knows, nor can brook that another should intermeddle with. It is a grief more agonising than separation by death; for the hand of the Almighty is displayed in such an awful stroke, and a mind chastened, such as was that of Evelyn, bows beneath the visible chastening: but none, save those who have experienced the anxiety of a long and faithful attachment, repaid by indifference, can know the agony which disappointed love feels by torturing the soul with images of bygone days of hope and enjoyment, and darkening the present gloom with sad forebodings of protracted woe. At first the rebellious heart refuses to acknowledge the directing hand of Providence, in the shaft that has been directed by the agency of a fellow mortal, nor is it till again awakened by religious truth to that certitude, that the mind can resume any healthfulness of tone, or return to the resigned trust in the mercy of God which alone can give peace in the darkest hour.

There are, perhaps, few of Evelyn's sex and age, whose minds are so strongly imbued with the very essence of true religion, as his. It was not, certainly, beneath the guidance of such an one as Lord Sherbourne, that he had learnt to mistrust all that the world calls happiness, unless supported by that sure hope, which sweetens the cup of bitterness, and heightens every enjoyment. The days of his early youth had been divided between the society of his departed uncle and that of General Falkland; and from them he had learnt the blessedness of an unshaken confidence in Divine Providence, and a watchful distrust

of those snares which lead presumptuous youth far from the paths of virtue. Accustomed, therefore, to that surest restraint, he did not long dwell on the delirious suggestions of passion; and, although nature had endowed him with so tender and affectionate a disposition, and that, in spite of his endeavors, his heart still clung to fond regrets, yet he felt the imperious duty of arousing himself to exertion.

Having, therefore, earnestly sought that aid, which is never denied to the sincere worshipper, he strove, vigorously, to banish all selfish considerations,—to think only of the happiness of his beloved Margaret,—and, if possible, to contribute to it himself, even to the destruction of his own. “Did I not tell her,” said he to himself, “how sincerely I prayed for her happiness; though conscious that that happiness depended upon another? Did I not assume a fortitude, which I knew not, then, how little I really possessed? And shall I now yield to selfish sorrow—which may, perhaps, reach her ears, and wound that kind heart, on whose bright path I would not cast one shadow? No! the fervency of my past affection, the prayers I have daily put up for her felicity, shall not be belied by selfish repining; nor shall I seem indifferent to the welfare of him who has been so blest, as to obtain her regard.” With these thoughts he hastened home,—his mind full of generous plans to promote the comfort of one for ever dear to his faithful heart.

His solitary dinner was removed almost untouched, and the distress expressed by his attached domestics was not the language of servile civility, but the sincere, though simple, sympathy of those on whom kindness, directed by good principle, is seldom thrown away. There is a popularity, which may be obtained by unworthy means; but, when those placed by Providence in elevated situations, endear themselves by acts of unwearied benevolence and indulgence, there is a charm in the affection of dependants, recognised

with gratitude by such as are conscious of deserving it. The evening passed more quickly by than Evelyn could have hoped; and as he folded the letter, which his generous heart had dictated with fluency,—but which, from his delicacy of feeling, he dreaded to word so as to give offence where he most meant to oblige,—a throb of honest joy thrilled through his soul, and lent a ray of brightness to the gloom of his disappointed hopes. Surely, the person most averse to receive benefits could not be offended by the generous impulse which dictated the following lines to a supposed successful rival.

“Dear Hamilton,

“You have doubtless heard of the sad event which has removed my dear and excellent uncle to a world for which his unshaken faith and exemplary life had so well prepared him; and I am sure you will sympathise with me on this occasion. But I will not dwell on this subject at a time when I trust the prospect is opening upon you of realising a happiness which you have long desired. Believe me, that the congratulations which I now offer are from my heart. I feel real concern, lest the difficulties in which you have been involved may cast a shade over your present enjoyment; and I cannot help trusting in the generous confidence of your friendship so far as to suppose that you will kindly listen to a suggestion, which I venture to offer, in the hope that you will not grieve me by rejecting it.

“Will you then, dear Hamilton, make what use you please of the money arising from the West Indian property possessed by my lamented uncle, amounting, I believe, to about £20,000, now lying *unemployed* at my bankers. It will be time enough, in after years, to repay a loan which cannot be any sacrifice to one whose wants are so limited as mine, nor can he hope to place it in better hands than those who will use it



to promote the comfort of a very dear and early friend. Pray forgive the intrusion of such a request, should you deem it such, and believe the earnestness of my sincerity when I assure you that you will, by accepting the offer, confer a lasting obligation on your faithful and sincere friend,

“ORMISTON.”

“Pray make my congratulations welcome to her, whose happiness I shall never cease to prize.”

Evelyn found more difficulty in addressing General Falkland on the subject, yet knew not how to avoid it without the appearance of indifference, or what he, perhaps, dreaded yet more—the discovery of those feelings he wished most to conceal; for he was well aware that his friend's partiality for himself had induced him long since to second those wishes, to which his daughter had given so decided a rejection, nor could he indure the thought of intruding one regret in the mind of this respected and beloved friend, for the choice she had made, either on her account or on his own. He therefore vaguely alluded to the happy events, of which he said he had been apprised, and added the most affectionate expressions of his wishes for their happiness.

The excitement which supported him, while fulfilling these duties, enabled him in some measure to subdue the grief of his heart; but when these were concluded, nature again resumed the ascendancy, and for many days his frame partook of the disorder of his mind, and he mourned in sickness, and in solitude, the agonies of a wounded spirit, till again the calls of duty aroused him to activity: nor was he left without reward for the frequent exertions which his benevolence called forth. Mr. Somerville often wrote to him, but made little mention of his daughter, except in compliance with his request to acquaint him with the state of her health; she had, he said, borne the

journey better than could have been expected, and he trusted that on the whole she was a degree stronger than when he had last seen her. His silence on the subject of her spirits assured him of the truth of his suspicions, when he had imagined that Mr. Somerville was not ignorant of her affection for him. "Could it be possible," thought he, "that in after years a dearer interest than that of friendship might render me worthy of that amiable girl? Alas! that I should feel so incapable of transferring that affection, long fixed upon one who can never repay it! Oh that I may learn to think of her as the wife of another—that other my friend, on whom I have laid the weight of an obligation, which doubly calls for the relinquishment of every other feeling than those of which honor and friendship may be the safeguards!"

With such contending thoughts was the mind of Evelyn exercised in his hours of loneliness and leisure. It was well for him, that the situation in which he was now placed called for attention to business of various kinds, precluding the possibility of continued indulgence in themes of such a heart-affecting nature.

## CHAPTER XIV.

"I know, I see,  
Her merit. Needs it now be shown,  
Alas ! to me?—  
How often, to myself unknown,  
The graceful, gentle, virtuous maid  
Have I admir'd ! how often said,  
What joy to call a heart like her's one's own !"

AKENSIDE.

No sooner was Susan restored to convalescence, and enabled to join the little circle in the drawing-room at Walrond Castle, than she was called on to exert herself to part with Eric Hamilton with seeming composure ; the effort was, however, rendered easier by the hope which she entertained of meeting him in London,—a hope not altogether unmingled with pleasure, though she blamed herself for admitting so deceptive a feeling, since she could not but regard him in the light of her sister's avowed lover, and one as truly, if not as deeply, beloved by Margaret, as by her. She felt that she could not regret Lord de Tracey's departure ; although she was grateful to him for his devotion, and for the delicacy of those attentions which he had quietly, but unceasingly, paid to her, and those dearest to her. In fact, the strong preference which her father evinced towards him seemed his best recommendation, since she was ever wont implicitly to rely on his judgment ; although she painfully felt the impossibility of transferring to Lord de Tracey that affection which had so long, so fervently, been bestowed on another.

When she found that Margaret was anxiously awaiting the day when they were to leave the Castle for London, she could not fail to guess the cause ; and she resolved more than once to strive to subdue those yearnings of her heart, which, if discovered, must prove fatal to the peace of both.

Margaret, on the other hand, rejoiced once more to see her dear Susan restored to health, and animated to more than usual spirits, in the prospect of so soon again meeting with Mr. Hamilton gave way to the buoyancy of her hopes, in frequent expressions of joy, by which she little knew how she was torturing the heart of his sister. Blinded by the natural enthusiastic ardour of her own mind, she saw all around her in the vivid colouring with which her fancy invested them; and she ceased not to praise Lord de Tracey as highly as she had once censured him. The cause was evident; he also had changed his once unfavorable view of Mr. Hamilton, or had at least seemed to do so; and he rose in proportion, in the estimation of both sisters. It would have been, indeed, difficult for any unsuspecting person not to have been fascinated by the charm of his manner, while he assumed the appearance of possessing excellencies which were but in part his own. He wanted the highest of all motives to guide his actions,—that motive, which alone can hallow the most beneficial deed, and gild the feeblest endeavor with celestial brightness.

It was not without some degree of astonishment Margaret heard of the intimacy subsisting between Evelyn and Miss Somerville. Strange that there should be so great a contradiction in the minds of those who deem themselves sincere; but so it was, that while she fancied that no better tidings could reach her ears than those of his happiness, and while, with the fervency of her devotion to Eric Hamilton, she imagined that she could never think one moment of another; she still felt a little mortified by the rumours afloat of Lord Ormiston's new attachment. "Surely," said she, one day to her sister, as they were returning from a parting visit to Mary Sinclair and her mother—"surely, you need not now wish me to pity Evelyn, since he has been so soon consoled. His love for me could never have been very deep."

"I am not sure of that," rejoined Susan; "human feeling cannot always be estimated by human conduct; and you must remember, that we are not the only persons who listen to reports, which may have entirely altered his motives and actions. You know how exalted are his principles; and if, as I have been told, the affection of Miss Somerville for him was such as to injure her health, he may have yielded to the hope of making her a good husband, and strengthened the necessity under which he now feels himself bound to forget you."—Susan drew a deep sigh—Margaret laughed nervously—"Never again will I believe lovers' vows——"

"Never?" inquired Susan. "I think, Margaret, you do not know yourself. I trust you will not have cause to doubt those from him whose love you may return."

"Well," rejoined Margaret, "I am sure, at least, of knowing you to be the dearest and best of sisters; you will guide and help me not to act as foolishly as my wild nature might lead me to do. Do you know, I was so absurd as to feel a little mortified, when I heard of her love for Evelyn: but he is such a good creature, and I hope that they will be happy. I wish our dear Eric's kind disposition were aided by that stability of principle which guides him in all he does. Do you know, Susan," added she, laughing, "I think *you* should marry Mr. Hamilton, because you could lead him in the right way; and *I* should have been advised by Evelyn, who would have acted as ballast to my sail, as Mr. Richardson would say."

It was well that the veil which hung over the countenance of Susan prevented her reading the emotion which it betrayed; for she had turned inquiringly towards her, as she uttered the last sentence. As it was, she continued heedlessly to wound those feelings which she did not perceive, until, joining their father, the conversation took another turn, and they proceeded homeward.

A few days after, the preparations were concluded, and General Falkland and his daughters on their way to London.

"Farewell, my dears," said the gruff voice of Mrs. Stewart, who had hastened, on the news of their projected journey, to bid Susan and her sister adieu. "Take care of yourselves, and wear thick shoes, and do not let any foolish vanity hinder you clothing yourselves well; it is wonderful how foolish young people will be," added she, still muttering to herself, as the carriage door was closing, and her uncle, Mr. Lazenby, was pouring forth his promises that his works should be concluded in two months, and that the General and his daughters, and all their friends, should have the most numerous and splendidly bound copies.

"God bless those dear girls!" said Mrs. Stewart, as they departed, while a tear rolled down her hard cheeks, and woman's softness for a moment beautified her usually morose-looking countenance. "Next to my dear Willy and Alexander, I love them more dearly than any one." "Fine girls—clever girls," said Mr. Lazenby, as he shouldered three large volumes of reference, which he had borrowed from the General's library, with which to enrich his theory, and stepped sedately behind the quicker pace of his niece, who usually arrived, at least, a mile's walk before him.

Good roads, four horses, and convenient inns, are sad drawbacks to those who love adventure; and there are few of such, who can contrive to meet with much that is amusing, who thus travel to the great city, to which numbers are daily hurrying in the same manner—some so occupied with mercenary business, that they have little leisure to expect romantic adventure, or to regret the want of it; some so engrossed with ambitious speculation, and their minds so much bent on their machinations, as wholly to overlook those passing scenes which might interest lovers of nature, or engage others, who see in all things, and in all persons, s

to please or amuse; some wholly given to the pursuit of pleasure, who blame the tardiness of the fleetest steeds, while hurrying to the great mart of dissipation; a few, haply, so engrossed by an all-consuming passion, that the present moment is lost in remembrance of the past, or in anticipation of that future which shall restore them to the object of their heart's desire:—none of those possessed the serene mind of General Balthard; to him every town and village through which they passed seemed an object of interest, as he considered the number of human souls who inhabited them, with their cares, and sorrows, and joys, all hastening on to that end from which there is no receding, and on which so few seem to have leisure to meditate. The lonely church, with its accompanying burial-ground, filled with the records of man's mortality—the solitary cottage, with its neat garden, in which the laborer stopped for a moment to gaze at, and perhaps to envy, the passing vehicle, and those it contained—the wandering pedlar, resting his burden upon the milestone, while eating his morsel—the blind beggar, with his faithful dog, or the poor widow hastening to visit her distant child, with tottering and feeble steps, these, and every other object connected with human interest, had power to engage his mind in useful and benevolent musing, when the scenery was not such as to arrest the attention of so genuine a lover of nature as himself. Occasionally his daughters read aloud to him; but their thoughts often wandered to their heart's interests, when he closed his eyes in sleep as evening came on, and they continued their journey in silence. Susan endeavored to rejoice in her sister's happiness; while Margaret, ignorant of her cares, hoped that her anxiety might, at least, be sooner terminated than her own.

The dusty loaded carriage drove through the park just at the hour when fashion brings such flowing numbers to its crowded ring, and many were the salu-

tations they received, as they passed to General Falkland's house.

"How gloomy a London house appears!" said Margaret, throwing herself at her father's feet, as he stretched himself on an ottoman in the lower drawing-room; "I almost wish myself back again at Walrond," added she; "don't you, dear papa?"

"No, love," replied the General, smiling; "and I think you will not long think so either," added he, as the porter put into his hands numerous visiting cards, and notes of invitation, which had poured in from the moment the cleaning of the windows, and the bustle of the upholsterers and glaziers, and other signs of preparations, had announced the prospect of their arrival to an idle crowd. "Here are three balls, and one concert, and more parties awaiting you;—what says my Margaret to these?"

"I say, dear father, that I shall not enjoy one of them so much as Mary's wedding feast;—but let me pull up those blinds, and throw a little light into this dingy saloon."

So saying, she hastened to the arrangement of the furniture, which, according to the taste of their domestics, was placed in formal array around the chamber; and while thus engaged, Lord de Tracey was announced. Susan entered at the same moment; a blush rose on her cheek, which increased the joyful agitation of her lover. "I have not been long in assailing your door, General. I met Elliott in Piccadilly, who told me he had seen your carriage, and I hoped you would not refuse to admit me for a moment; but I will not bore you long with my presence, for you must be dreadfully tired. I trust," added he, with a tenderer tone to Susan, "that you have not suffered from your journey."

Susan's reply was interrupted by the General begging that Lord de Tracey would stay and dine with them. "We shall have our mutton chop, and then



go to bed; pray stay and enliven us a little, for Margaret thinks London so dull, she already wishes to return."

"Could I possibly assist in detaining her from such a proceeding," said Lord de Tracey, smiling, and fixing his eyes on Susan, "I should, indeed, deem myself happy; but I have, alas, a stupid dinner engagement."

"Oh, never mind," said the General, "you will be in time for a London dinner, should you stay to eat with us." The matter was easily decided, and Lord de Tracey remained.

It was a relief to Susan, when he was obliged to retire early to make his toilette for the fulfilment of his engagement; for, wearied as she was in body, she felt little able for exertion, and Lord de Tracey's were not a little lessened, by observing the listless manner in which she replied to his observations, and by the animation which she could not conceal, when, in answer to General Falkland's inquiry, he spoke of Mr. Hamilton. His suspicions concerning her attachment for him were again awakened; but he consoled himself by thinking, that at any rate Margaret was the object of his attachment. He made her happy, by whispering that Hamilton had appeared the picture of wretchedness, until the day when he had heard of their intended arrival. He rallied her a little on the report which, he said, had become so general in town, that he hoped he might soon be permitted to give her joy on her approaching happiness. "Quite a steady fellow now," added he, "quite domestic." So saying, he shook her hand, and departed; and Margaret proceeded to conceal her confusion by the most voluble expressions in favor of their late guest: so agreeable—so perfectly elegant in his manner—so good looking. Her father smiled. "I do not know Margaret, what he whispered to you; but the result is

in his favor, and he certainly deserves your admiration. Does he not, Susan?"

"Oh, yes," she replied, scarcely knowing what she said; but letters and parcels were placed before them, and the arrangements which their arrival required came to her relief, and they were soon on their way to repose.

Next morning they were assailed by dress makers and milliners, who, no sooner had they gained admittance, than they strewed the sofas and chairs with the contents of their wicker baskets, declaring, that what they possessed of apparel, looked as if it came out of Noah's ark,—holding up hats, caps, and dresses innumerable, for their observation, and detaining them for hours on subjects which could not but appear insignificant to those whose native beauty had, perhaps, made them more indifferent to dress, than others of the same sex and age. There is something in acknowledged beauty defies vanity, as much as real greatness defies pride; and there were few of the many young ladies who entered that year on their career of gaiety, who were less occupied than were Susan and Margaret concerning that all-important subject to most women—dress; and yet there were few who obtained so much of the admiration of one sex, and the envy of the other. Visits and invitations crowded upon them; and though others would have told their fashionable acquaintance that "they had not seen a soul—that they had been no where—that they never saw so dull a season—and that there was positively nothing to do,"—and similar expressions of fashionable nonsense, daily pronounced by those who spend their mornings in crowds, and their nights at balls,—the Miss Falklands considered themselves very dissipated, when, after a fortnight's sojourn in town, they had heard Pasta once, and had returned one morning from a ball, between one and two, given by Lady Sherbourne, and at which the presence of Hamilton was the inducement

to both sisters, thus to prolong the hours of gaiety till they each regretted it—from different motives, but with the same result, for each was grieved and disappointed: and well can those sympathise with their feelings, who have known what it is, amidst a crowd of indifferent persons, to single the object of their preference, with wearying anxiety; to be interrupted by the careless voice of fashionable *betise*, uttering some phrase of indifference to equally careless ears, but to which courtesy claims a reply; then to turn for the one sought after, and see that one engaged, as if with the deepest interest, with another, with whom, perhaps, they are as little amused as the being who envies them; and to find, at the conclusion of an evening which had begun with hope and joy, that both mind and body, uselessly excited, now sink with regret and exhaustion, when, in the solitude of home, no other sound is heard but the rumbling of carriages returning from the same attempt at pleasure, no other remembrance remains but those attended by disappointment and vexation, while the false excitement lingers as a bird of prey around the spirit, and impedes the collectedness of thought which those sigh for, who have been from childhood accustomed to conclude their day with meditation and prayer.

To those whose fate has led them from their earliest years into scenes of worldly amusement, and from which it may appear impossible to withdraw, there may not be the same danger of forgetfulness; for custom has deprived them of that measure of excitement, which enthralls the spirits of such as have led a country life: but these will be struck, on a renewed entrance into the world, by the sense of the *entrainement* which it produces; and where reason and real religion, have hitherto actuated the heart and conscience, there will be a redoubled necessity imposed upon them, by the knowledge of their weakness, to watchfulness in such an hour of temptation.

It had been well for poor Eric Hamilton, had he sought, in his hours of loneliness, that strength, which alone could have fortified his mind against the snares which beset him, and which, meeting him in moments of one disappointed passion, stimulated him to the pursuit of another, which had already consumed too much of his time and his talents, and which was fatally regaining its baneful ascendancy over him.

Lord de Tracey's constant intimacy with Susan, and the daily reports which this intimacy occasioned, added to the apparent satisfaction which his attentions gave to the Falkland family, combined to fill the mind of Hamilton with despair of ever renewing those hopes, which had once so far beneficially influenced him, as to restrain him from pursuits into which he again found himself involved. Whenever he visited General Falkland of a morning, he found his daughters surrounded by a train of admirers. Lord de Tracey was ever amongst them, and seemed to claim his post beside Susan, as his right: riding or walking, still his dreaded rival was there, to impede his approach, or to fill him with mortification, by evincing that calm satisfaction and security, in the seeming possession of that favor which he most envied. True it was, that Margaret was ever ready to greet him with her accustomed smile, and that in her society he might well feel, as he had ever done, that he was the friend and companion of their youthful days; but his passion for her sister blinded his eyes to those charms which shone yet more brightly when his presence lent a sweeter lustre to her expressive face, and added an endearing softness to her playful manner: and while she spake to him in those witching tones, which had filled many a heart with bliss, and which love alone can harmonize, he was listening to the cold replies which fell from the lips of Susan, and watching her placid movements, as she strove when in his company to assume an indifference which she could not feel; but which he believed

to be genuine—Then would he bitterly reproach himself for loving so fervently one who returned his affection with so much apathy, and inveighing inwardly against her cold, heartless manner, he would repair to the gaming table, and endeavor by this false and baneful excitement to banish reflection; but it was in vain. Again he awoke to agonizing regrets, but not to repentance—amiable as was his natural disposition, the want of solid principle impaired a character which might have been under other guidance, not only brilliant, but valuable; and day after day returned, and still found him the prey of those contending passions which, by their very nature, seemed only to harass and disappoint him.

Among those who had sufficient penetration to see through the general mistake which prevailed as to the object of his love, was Mr. Elliott, who failed not, for his own purposes, to make use of his discernment to the further detriment of the unfortunate young man.

Mr. Elliott had begun by entertaining no other feeling for Susan than a wish to be on an amicable footing with her, because she was the fashion, and because he liked to prove to the world that he was one of her most favored followers: but her society proved dangerous even to his heart, worn out and blazé as his feelings had become by a life of constant intercourse with the gay and dissipated world, and when he found his attentions were disregarded, and that his disposition was too well known to be admired by her whom he had wearied by his fulsome flatteries, and unpleasant attentions, the love such as he was capable of entertaining was soon converted into hatred; and though he ceased not to be a daily visiter at the house of General Falkland; and though he would not relinquish his original object of being considered as a favored swain of Susan's; his chief concern, in seeking her society, was now to impede the possibility of her ever enjoying the society of him to whom she was so devotedly attached.

Often, when wearied and disgusted with his mode of life, Eric Hamilton would, on no higher principle than that of dislike of the effects of dissipation, have retired home in preference to repairing as usual to the gaming-table, Mr. Elliott would contrive to insinuate into his mind the delightful excitement which he lost by so doing, and persuade him to accompany him to these haunts of degradation; afterwards would he, in presence of General Falkland, relate the losses of his unfortunate young friend, as he called him, and lament that he should thus squander the remains of a shattered fortune. Mr. Elliott gained nothing by this baseness but the contempt of Susan, and the dislike of her sister, who could not but imagine they discerned the motive of Mr. Elliott by these ungenerous tales against one whom he called his friend. But it served as a renewed warning to General Falkland, to guard against the two frequent intercourse of his daughters with Mr. Hamilton; and entertaining, as he did, the highest opinion of Lord de Tracey, he was more than ever desirous that the suit which he preferred with so much perseverance should be favored by his dear Susan.

## CHAPTER XV.

"It may be thou art entered into the cloud which will bring a gentle shower to refresh thy sorrows."

J. TAYLOR.

ONE morning, when Susan had remained longer than usual alone in her chamber, she was aroused from the sorrowful meditation in which she was engaged by her sister's entrance. Margaret's spirits, once so gay and lively, had of late been deeply depressed, not only by Eric Hamilton's altered manner, but by the reports which Mr. Elliott had so successfully contrived to circulate, that many spoke to her on the subject, to whom she would have thought it treason to breath one word in censure about the beloved of her heart. She felt the trial, painfully and more deeply when the warning voice of her revered father pointed out the danger of a woman's fixing her affections on a gamester. Such counsel, however, he was wont to bestow in general terms, for he deemed it best not to wound the feelings of either party by seeming to guess the truth, while he endeavored to avert the baneful effects of this unfortunate attachment so as best to promote their ultimate happiness.

Susan rejoiced to hear the gay tone of voice of Margaret, so much more like that of former days than she had done since their arrival in town, as she called her to hasten down stairs to enjoy a pleasure which awaited her.

"What is it, dear Margaret?" inquired she, "anything will please me that makes you look more like yourself than you have done of late."

"Well, I must tell you, rejoined Margaret, though I cannot give you a surprize. Our dear Mr. Mont-

gomery has just returned from the country, and he is looking quite fresh and young, and so happy to see us again; I have left him with papa, busily engaged in conversation over a projected portrait which he is going to make of us—so you must put on your best smiles to welcome the dear old man.”

Susan hastened to follow her sister—Mr. Montgomery was not only a man whose genius and talent had rendered him an acceptable guest to those able to appreciate talent and worth, but one of the oldest friends of General Falkland—one for whom he entertained the highest regard, and whose character could be fully appreciated by those alone who knew him as intimately and as well as they did. Born of humble parents, Mr. Montgomery had entered life in a sphere totally different from that to which his talent had introduced him; but, gifted with a mind far above his situation, he was at an early age the friend and companion of many persons of exalted condition in rank as well as of mind. And although he still retained the simplicity and even abruptness of his nature, he was able to appreciate the innate distinctions of manner in those with whom he associated, as well as the motives which actuated their conduct. An early disappointment had somewhat soured a naturally harsh temper, and lent a degree of moroseness to his manner when in the society of those who did not please him; but with the General and his lovely daughters, this gave way to a friendly freedom and a degree of pleasantry, which, from the originality of its nature, served to enhance the pleasure which they took in the enjoyment of his company.

When the first salutations were over, which lasted a considerable time—for he did not wish to relinquish the white hand which his large bony grasp shook repeatedly, while his small grey eyes glistened with pleasure on the lovely face of Susan—he whispered to her father, “More beautiful than ever, General:”



and then aloud; "what are you doing here, ladies, wasting your bloom in this smoky town—I'm sure ye would be better employed at Walrond, and ye would certainly make a better picture there among the heather and the broom. Oh, I weary to tread the moors again."

"And why don't you?" enquired Margaret; "your room has been ready these two years, and a quiet pony awaiting you in papa's stable—and you never come."

Mr. Montgomery gave something between a sigh and a groan; then, in a voice in which sorrow and crossness seemed to contend, said, "I can't get away—they won't let me away, and if they did I should not go."

"Oh, but we will take you with us," said Margaret, laughing, and throwing her scarf playfully around him; "see you are a prisoner now. Papa, claim his promise."

"We shall talk of that hereafter, love," rejoined the General, who thought that Mr. Montgomery's friendship was scarcely at that moment proof against the instability of his temper, which he remarked at that moment, though he knew not the cause. "But pray, my dear friend, let us fix a day for my daughters' first sitting."

"Let me see," said Mr. Montgomery, counting on his fingers, "to-morrow I shall be engaged all day with those vile carpenters, who never do as they are bid, except I stand over them—Wednesday I have given a promise to Lord B——, and I cannot break my word;—Thursday?—Yes!—Thursday at eleven o'clock;—remember, ladies, you are in time," said he, while his face again relaxed into a smile, as he gazed on the beautiful girls before him, and as his mind reverted to the position in which they were placed, as being favorable to his picture. "There, now—so," said he; "that would do very well—but

none of those fashionable frills or tippets, or what do you call them—just made to disfigure people,” added he, as his broad Scotch acquired a yet severer accent, and his energy increased; “I never saw such hideous things as those French milliners make up for the disfigurement of women: it is just deplorable.”

As he continued to inveigh against fashion, and to enlarge on flowing draperies, &c., Mr. Hamilton was announced—he rose hastily and in apparent confusion.

“Oh! don’t go—don’t go!” said every voice at once; and Margaret took his arm to detain him. He still advanced towards the door, and, as he did so, Mr. Hamilton passed him—a flush spread over his withered cheek, and he turned to gaze at the handsome figure which was bending to salute General Falkland as he sat on his couch.

“Who’s that?” said he, in a low tone to Margaret; “surely I heard;” and he frowned morosely.

“Mr. Hamilton,” rejoined she, and, as she spoke the blood mantled in her cheek.

“Beware of the name,” said Mr. Montgomery, pressing her hand; and before she could recover from her astonishment, he was gone.

“What an odd looking old fellow,” said Eric; “truly I may say, in Burns’ language, he glowered at me, as if he had seen a warlock.”

“He is an old friend of mine,” replied the General. “A Scotch painter, whom I have known for these thirty years, and am therefore, acquainted with his worth, and accustomed to his oddities; but he certainly does not inspire every one with the same liking—his temper has been soured by many vexations and disappointments, and he has too little regard to outward appearance to conceal that which he has not sufficient philosophy to repress—namely a distrust of every person, with whom he is not thoroughly acquainted—I could wish my friend entertained a more amiable view of human nature.”

"And I, also," rejoined Eric, bitterly, "though there is enough in the world to disgust a man from confiding in any one. I hear that my *friend* Elliott is among those who take every possible care to abuse me to every one who names me—but he shall answer for it. By Heavens!" continued he impetuously, "could but I ascertain that to be true I have just heard, I would—"

"Softly," said General Falkland, laying his hand on his arm, "you forget the the presence of ladies—you forget that—"

"I beg a thousand pardons," said Hamilton, endeavoring to laugh; and to convert into a joke that which it was quite apparent was none in reality—"but really that old man cast such an evil eye on me that it elicited all the fire which I had intended to suppress in such society. Have you heard," said he, turning to Margaret, and anxious now to change the subject—"have you heard of the great concert which is to take place next Saturday morning, for the benefit of some hospital—I forget what for? You know these charities of life are not my province; but here are the cards which will tell about all it. Lady Sherhourne filled my pockets with them, when she heard I intended calling upon you, and begged that I would ask you all to go, and here is a large parcel for your friends."

"Oh! I should be delighted," said Margaret, "if Papa has no objection."

"None in the world," said General Falkland; and Margaret's eye glistened with anticipated pleasure, and Susan sighed; for her's met those of Eric Hamilton, and he looked sadly as he enquired whether she also would attend, and put a card into her hand, with an expressive smile of bitterness, adding, "I have no doubt, you can dispose of one at least for a *charity*." So saying, he rose to depart, for at that moment Lord de Tracey and Baron Dompfel entered the room—Margaret was elated—she forgot Mr. Montgomery's

warning, nor did it recur to her till she lay down that night to rest: but she thought she had seen more kindness in Eric Hamilton's manner than she had done since they had met in London; and with the pleasure which awaited her, and with that excitement which she felt after conversing with him, she received the guests with more than usual spirit, and hastened to comply with Baron Dompfel's request that she would accompany him with her voice, while he sang and played some new German Duetts.

In the meantime General Falkland's engagement with his book left Lord de Tracey and Susan to a tête-a-tête, which he failed not to profit by, by urging his suit more fervently than he had ever before done—Poor Susan, enfeebled by agitation, was melted to tears, and forced to leave the room; but, she had not entirely rejected him, and Lord de Tracey soon retired full of hope, and more desirous than ever to obtain a hand so long sought, but which, with all his worldly advantages, he felt himself so little worthy to gain. His was not the refinement of feeling to shrink from the pursuit of one whose affections were pre-engaged. He was not ignorant of her preference for Mr. Hamilton, although so careful was she to conceal it, that at times he doubted, as he wished to do, that there was any foundation for his suspicions. Aware of the influence which her father held over the mind of Susan, and of the eminence on which he stood in his opinion, Lord de Tracey hastened home to address General Falkland, with a letter full of the most ardent expressions of devotion for his daughter; and entreating him to exert his influence in his favor. Then followed protestations of eternal devotedness to her every interest—of undivided attention to her every care, and all the eloquence which a passionate lover knows how to use—it was her eyes he intended should peruse a letter thus addressed by way of prov-

ing how much he dreaded her disdain, while at the same time he apprehended it.

For some days after Lord de Tracey's visit, Susan's indisposition prevented her leaving the house. It was the effect of constant agitation, which thus renewed her disorder; and, again General Falkland and Margaret were condemned to endure all the anxiety which they had before experienced, on her account; from this attack however she rallied, and when the day came on which they had settled to sit for their portraits, to Mr. Montgomery, she was sufficiently recovered to permit Margaret to absent herself to fulfil her engagement.

It was a dim yellow morning, such as is often seen in London, even in summer; but Margaret, who had been for some days confined to the house, preferred walking, and, accompanied by her maid, she set out for Mr. Montgomery's house.

It was about half an hour previous to that which he had named that she arrived at Mr. Montgomery's door; for, partly through difference of watches, partly through fear of offending him by being too late, Margaret had hurried her steps with more than ordinary speed—the door was opened by a dirty looking housemaid, who stood irresolute whether to admit visitors at any hour which her punctual master had not led her to expect. Margaret, however, assured her she came by appointment, and was ushered into a small dark room on the ground floor, where she had ample leisure for her own reflections; as Mr. Montgomery did not appear till the clock struck eleven, according to his directions—and truly the scene was by no means a pleasant one, for she had some scruples as to placing herself on one of the horse-hair chairs, four of which were placed in a row on one side, while something which pretended to be a sofa of the same materials, thickly encrusted with dust, adorned the opposite end, and a very dirty grate filled with

cut paper answered to the door by which she had entered.

Had she indulged any curiosity as to what was passing in the street, to which the windows looked, she would have found it impossible to gratify such a wish, the under casement being shaded by some very dirty olive green blinds, and the upper so deeply encrusted with the mingled dust and soot of years, that scarcely sufficient transparency remained to admit a small portion of the dim yellow light which shines in a dull morning in London—at length however, the slide of a pair of down-at-heel slippers was heard echoing through the dark gloomy passage, the door opened, and Mr. Montgomery stood before her.—One of his frowns stood on his brow, a frown which Margaret well understood, for she had often seen, and knew how to avert it, by never thwarting him till she had persuaded him into an explanation of the cause of his displeasure, when it immediately vanished.

“The room is ready for you *now*,” said he putting a marked emphasis on the one word *now*.

“I fear,” said Margaret, “my unusually early knock disturbed you, but I do not care how long I wait.”

“No,” rejoined Mr. Montgomery, “some folks have nothing to do—but take pleasure jaunts—It’s no wonder if they’re in time. Take care,” continued he, as Margaret prepared to follow him through the dark passage which led to his study, and which was considerably impeded by pictures—frames—old carved chairs, and sundry other cumbrous articles, heaped in confusion on either side.—“Take care that you do not hurt yourself, or, may be, spoil some of my pictures—I have been intending daily to get these things put out of the way; but I cannot let my servant touch them, she’s so stupid she does not yet know the difference between a picture and a looking-glass—Look here,” continued he, opening the door of his study, and lifting a drawing, which since its accident had

been turned out in disgrace. "Look how she destroyed this for me; I gave her the key of my study one morning, that she might fetch me my specs—and she took that opportunity of setting my table to rights, as she called it—Turned all my things topsey turvey, and ended by dusting my drawing, which was within a few strokes of being completed.

Margaret was glad to find that Mr. Montgomery's wrath was venting itself on the housemaid, and continued to repeat "How provoking! how distressing," till she was interrupted by her cross old friend saying "Where is your sister? what's the use of one of you without the other? but I suppose *she'll* come an hour *after* her time." Margaret acquainted him with her sister's illness, and in a moment Mr. Montgomery forgot all his grievances. "Ill, did you say?" said he, his thin face becoming more drawn and pale as he shook his head. "I doubt, my dear, whether you are not as bad as she is—It is my opinion," drawing himself closer to Margaret, and taking her hand, with that kindness which his words sometimes belied—It's my opinion that you're both ill, and of the same complaint. I've heard more than you would suppose I could who scarcely stir from the enclosure of these four walls—and I wish to heaven I had not heard it, or rather that there was no truth in it."

"What can you mean?" said Margaret, nervously, her thoughts reverting to the strange warning he had given her, as he quitted her when she last saw him—"Tell me, my dear Mr. Montgomery what you mean, and why," added she, blushing crimson, "why you uttered such strange words the other day."

"I have, may be, better reasons than you can guess, my dear, for doing so; but now I will just take a look at you, since you are here, though I doubt I cannot do much good to-day. When a man's put out of his way," continued he, with a peculiar expression of ill-humor, which Margaret felt was directed towards herself—

"When a man's put out of his way in the morning, he's unfitted for work all day;" so saying, he proceeded to lay hold of his gigantic easel with each hand, and to pull it across the uncarpeted floor, as if uncertain when or where it was to rest, till the grating sound echoed through the lofty apartment with no pleasing effect.

Margaret looked around her on the curious arrangement, or rather disorder, of this old man's study. Around the walls were placed numerous pictures, some finished, some in progress, all placed with their canvass and wooden backs to view; for Mr. Montgomery dreaded above all things that ignorant eyes should behold his works in his presence, well aware that his temper could not brook to hear their observations—and wo to any one whose curiosity should tempt him to turn them. No apology could counteract the effect of so much presumption, or avert the storm which was sure to follow.

A lily figure, covered with an old chintz curtain, stood in death-like stillness in one corner, and reflected its unsightly face and form in a long pier-glass opposite, on the frame of which were suspended a green shade for the artist's eyes, bearing marks of many years' faithful service, and an old drab great coat. One very dirty table was covered with brushes of every size and dimension, together with a huge bundle of rags. On another was placed a large set pallet, with three or four pair of spectacles and a black mirror in a solid case. The only chair intended for general use was occupied by Margaret's bonnet and shawl, which promised no brighter re-appearance from the thick lair of dust in which their new situation had placed them. A wooden platform, on which was placed a large arm-chair, with gilt frame and crimson silk cushion, completed the furniture of this strange-looking apartment, and on this Margaret was at length desired to seat herself, when Mr. Montgomery, seizing



a large piece of chalk, seemed to have satisfied himself as to the position of sitter and easel, and retiring at a considerable distance, frowned upon Margaret, as if he entertained some far more sinister design than that of portraying features to which it would have been difficult to have added a sweeter expression than her's possessed.

"There now," said he, as he advanced with hasty step to the canvass, and hastily sketched some wonderfully powerful lines, tracing, with a genius such as few are master of, an elegant outline of her face and hair. "Why can't ye always let your hair hang as it does now, and not comb and scrape it up to the top of your head as if you had none." The damp of the morning, and the removal of the bonnet, had somewhat lessened the original order with which she had prepared the hair, and Margaret expressed herself obliged to these for having met his taste better than she could have done.

"Ah! there was but one who never appeared otherwise than as she ought to have done for a picture," said Mr. Montgomery, leaning on the stick on which he had rested his hand for drawing, and looking up in Margaret's face with a melancholy countenance—"but she is in her grave now, and it is well for me that she is—and it had been better for me had I never seen her."

"I wish, dear Mr. Montgomery," said Margaret, rising, and forgetting all the injunctions she had received not to stir from her original position; "I wish you would not think me intrusive, were I to request you to fulfil your long given promise, to acquaint me concerning one for whom I entertain the liveliest interest, because I am sure that it is on her account that——"

"That what?" rejoined Mr. Montgomery. "That I have made an old fool of myself, and that you have completely spoiled my sketch by moving," said he,

brushing a tear from his eye, and, returning to the canvass before him, he brushed out all he had done in a moment.

"A thousand, thousand pardons," said Margaret, hastily returning to her seat, and replacing herself as she thought exactly in the same attitude as before.

"Hoot! said Mr Montgomery, "do you think yon stiff gait will serve my turn? Na; na; I ken brawly what will keep you quiet; think of one I saw in your father's house, last week, and ye'll do well enough."

It was a pity that Mr. Montgomery had not left his sketch as he begun it, for the color which mounted to her forehead, and the ineffable expression of reproachful kindness, mingled with a dearer emotion, had rendered his portrait one of invaluable interest: but he continued,

"Forgive me, my dear lady, forgive the fancies of a man who has been soured by disappointment, broken down with sorrow, rendered hateful by the want of sympathy—and hateful from feeling the want of it. Forgive me, dear lady, I am an ungrateful, a heartless wretch!" so saying, he dropped his pencil and stick, and sank down on the chair beside him.

"Do not say so," said Margaret, now rising without fear of reproach; "when you are able, tell me your griefs, and you shall not want sympathy—nay, you do not want it now, be assured."

"The day is passed," said Mr. Montgomery, resuming his composure, "long past, since even your kindness could avail me any thing; but it is a comfort—it is a consolation—to claim your sympathy, and, since I have opened the subject, I will not dismiss it till you know all. Sit down, my dear," said he, looking round for a chair, but in vain. "I never have but one chair for myself, and one for my sitter," said he, in his usual tone of ill-humor, "or else there would be no end of all folks' friends coming in with them to hover about what they know nothing of; but I am sorry you should thus kneel on this dirty floor."

"Oh never mind that," said Margaret, as, totally regardless of her garments, she crouched at the old man's feet amid the relics of dust, paint, and turpentine, forgetful of all but the desire of hearing what Mr. Montgomery had to tell her.

"Well then, my dear," continued he, "what like is that young man—that Hamilton—I saw at your house the other day?"

Margaret started; it was a curious introduction, she thought, to his own history, and the question puzzled her; "Oh, you saw him," said she, bending her eyes upon the ground.

"Yes, I saw him, and he is very like—too like—. I have never closed an eye since the day I met him."

"Like whom?" inquired Margaret, breathlessly.

"Like his mother!—like my young—my beautiful—my betrothed; like her who wronged—like her who deserted me for one whose name he bears—whose name I hate. And I fear, my dear young lady—I fear for you—for your sister's sake, that in character he is too like his father."

"For my sake!—for my sister's!! What can you mean?" said Margaret.

"Yes," said Mr. Montgomery, with increased warmth, "I know all—I know that you love him; I know that your sister is engaged, or will shortly be engaged to one to whom she will give her hand without her heart. Beware, beware of breaking that sister's heart whom you love so well—beware of indulging an affection for one who returns it not. I speak harshly to your ears, but it is for your welfare, believe me."

Margaret remained stupified with astonishment. A thousand conflicting thoughts—a thousand remembrances of circumstances which once appeared in so different a light—now stood before her in all their heart-rending reality. Scarcely yet could she be undeceived; the hopes, the joys of years were about to be torn

from her ; but they were the hopes and joys of youth's deceitful dream : and the sad truth, which time must inevitably discover, was thus at once abruptly revealed, though not entirely believed.

"I was once, as you have been," continued Mr. Montgomery, "elated with that most dear, most precious hope, the thought of being truly and faithfully beloved by one who had been the companion of my earliest years, the partner of my infant joys and sorrows, the sharer of my every hour of pleasure, the sympathizing solace of my cares. At length the affection, which grew into passion, revealed my love for her ; it was mutual, and she promised me her heart and hand, with all the blushing loveliness of innocence and truth. We parted, and, in the mean time, Mr. Hamilton's father, a young and handsome man, gifted with worldly advantages far superior to any I had to boast, became a frequent visiter at her mother's house. She broke her faith to me, and married him. But how was she rewarded ? Disappointment in the object of her choice followed. He became disgusted with the quiet life she loved, ran into folly and dissipation, and broke her heart. She died of a rapid consumption, a few months after the birth of her only son ; and her husband's wild and thoughtless career was soon put an end to by death. You know the rest—you know how the early life of the descendant of such parents has been spent ; you can tell of the fascination of that young man's appearance and manners ; you are aware also of his defects, but you know not that he has won your sister's heart, as well as yours ;—you know not that that heart is breaking in secret, or that she will carry on, as I am doing, the lengthened chain of existence with lingering decay of spirit, such as no time can change—no earthly power can renovate."

As he finished his sentence, Margaret's head sunk upon his knee, her eyes closed, and, when he strove to rouse her, he found that she had fainted. Placing her

gently as he could upon the chair, he ran for water, and in a few moments, she revived.

"I have heard all," she said, with a calmness which filled his honest heart with admiration, till the tears gushed from his eyes and streamed upon his furrowed cheek; "I have heard all; and, though little prepared for such a trial, I trust in God I shall meet it as I ought, for I have deserved it. Hear me, my revered friend, I intreat you. Do not betray the emotion I have shown: I shall also henceforth conceal, as she has done so long, so nobly, her heart's grief. He shall be hers; nor shall I suffer one selfish regret to mingle with my rejoicing in her happiness. Now every difficulty is removed: now is every doubt solved. Sweet angelic girl! how long has she borne with me. But it shall be thus no longer—I will speak to Eric Hamilton myself. Surely the affection of such a being will stimulate him to virtuous enterprise, and reclaim him from that which the consciousness of my unworthy love has failed in doing. How vain! how foolish—how blind I have been. What must he think of me?" Tears choked her utterance, and Mr. Montgomery wept with her.

"You are as good and as sweet a girl as I ever knew," he said; "but you must endeavor to compose yourself, while I tell you how I have become entirely acquainted with all I have to say to you. The day after I met him at your house, I received a note in a handwriting which I had never seen before; I looked at the signature, and found it to be 'Eric Hamilton.' I was about to cast the letter away in a rage, such as I grieve to say I often give way to: but something restrained me. He asked for an interview with me, and I granted it. Our conversation proved one of deep and mournful interest to me. He made me, stranger as I was to him, the confidant of his cares. He said he knew my circumstances and my character, and that there was not on earth a living creature to whom he

would thus intrust his secret but to me. He intreated me to paint for him a portrait of Susan—he spoke not of you. But you had unwittingly betrayed yourself. I knew all—I could not make him the promise he wished; but he seized a sketch I had done of her long ago, which lay on my table up-stairs, where we were speaking, and, ere I could persuade him to return it, rushed out of the room like a mad-man.”

“Thank you, thank you, dear Mr. Montgomery!” said Margaret, pressing his hand; “thank God he does not know the extent of my weakness,—and she may yet be happy. I am impatient to be with her, but I fear I am unable to walk. Will you be kind enough to bid my servant call a hackney-coach for me? and I will go home immediately.”

Mr. Montgomery hastened to obey her, and drawing off his pepper-and-salt working-dress, he quickly exchanged it for his coat, and was soon handing Margaret into a coach, into which he followed her.

“But what shall I say to my father—my dear father?” said Margaret.

“The truth, my dear!” said Mr. Montgomery, solemnly. “Have no concealments from a parent,—and such a parent. Tell him all,—or I will tell him. All he seeks is your happiness; and you both need his counsel.”

As he spoke, the coach stopped at General Falkland’s door; the steps were let down—the door opened. Margaret’s arm touched one who was coming down the steps of the house. It was Eric Hamilton.

“Stay!” she said, catching by the rails to keep herself from falling—“Stay, I intreat!” but he heard her not. In a few minutes he was seen rapidly turning the corner of the street, and was out of sight.

## CHAPTER XVI.

"Ah! sans doute ce n'est pas l'amour que l'éternité peut être comprise. Il confond toutes les notions de tems : il efface les idées de commencement et de fin : on croit avoir toujours aimé l'objet qu'on aime tant il est difficile de concevoir qu'on ait pu vivre sans lui. Plus la separation est affreuse moins elle paroît vraisemblable : elle devient comme la mort une crainte dont on *parle plus, qu'on n'y croit* : un avenir qui semble impossible alors même qu'on scait qu'il est inevitable."

MADAME de STEAL.

ABOUT half an hour after Margaret left her father's house for that of the painter's, a cabriolet stopped its furious pace opposite General Falkland's door, and Lord de Tracey, leaping from it, eagerly inquired whether General Falkland were at home? He was told that he was out, riding, and was not expected to return till late in the afternoon, as he had gone some miles out of town.

"Are the young ladies in?" said he breathlessly.

"Yes, Miss Falkland."—He was admitted.

Lord de Tracey was regarded by the General's household, as he was by the rest of the world, the bridegroom elect of Susan, and the servant thought there could be no objection to *his* admission. He was ushered into the drawing room, but found it vacant. After waiting some time, he sat down and wrote the following words :—

"Do not, I entreat, deny me a few moments' conversation—my life depends upon it!" Then, hastily sealing it, he desired the servant to carry it to Susan.

There are perhaps few so consistent in purpose and in action, who cannot look back on events and periods of their lives wherein they have conducted themselves so as not only to be a wonder to others, but even to themselves. The impetuous and the daring have hesitated and trembled at a time when others would have

imagined *they* could only decide; the cautious and the wary have dashed aside their natural timidity, and boldly rushed where before they would scarcely have trod. Circumstances do at times so influence the bearing of those who deem themselves beyond their power, that they often look back with astonishment at a moment which has defeated the thoughts and projects of years—revealing to the mind its weakness where it had fancied itself most strong, or teaching the thoughtful to distrust all but the virtuous intention, and the aid of Divine Providence to put it into execution.

Long had Susan pondered over the necessity of overcoming an attachment which she believed hopeless, and which, had it been mutual, must have overthrown a beloved sister's dearest hopes. Long had she resolved to endeavor to gratify her father's wishes by accepting Lord de Tracey's offers of marriage, and striving, in fulfilment of duty, to feel for him that devotedness of heart which she had long given to another; but the weakness which her mental and bodily illness had shown her, since the last and most distinct overture from Lord de Tracey, in which she had more realized the agonizing difficulty of the conflict, had almost decided her to reject him, and await the trial which she fancied would not be long in coming to an issue, by her sister's marriage with Mr. Hamilton.

Strange! that, after such a determination, the interview of a few moments should overthrow it! A father's joy—a sister's happiness—the hope of concealing, or at last overcoming, at a distance from them, the ill-fated attachment which she feared she never could hide under the circumstances she anticipated—all conspired to fix her purpose, and Lord de Tracey was accepted.

She told him she could not reward his love as he deserved; but on any terms he besought her not to



withdraw her promise—hoped that his constancy and devotion might some day win that which she could not now bestow, and left her with all the triumph of an accepted lover. As he passed from the room, he met Mr. Hamilton in the vestibule. He took his hand gaily:—

“How are you, my good fellow?—well, I hope, as I am. Well, we are the two happiest fellows in London; aren't we?”

“I do not know,” said Hamilton, withdrawing his hand with a look of ill-concealed aversion; for he thought he saw a triumph in Lord de Tracey's eyes which mocked his misery—a misery of which he believed him to be well aware, spite of the world's rumors; for jealousy is quick in discernment, and he could not be gulled by the voice of idle indifference.

Lord de Tracey left the house, and Hamilton entered the drawing room. He looked around—all was still. He thought there was no one in the apartment, and, leaning his head on the chimney, awaited the expected appearance of Susan. At length, after some minutes, he heard the utterance of a deep-drawn sigh; and the words “God help and strengthen me,” were uttered in a low and solemn tone by the voice of Susan.

“You are not alone,” said Hamilton, advancing towards the sofa on which she reclined, and where she had been hitherto concealed by the high screen which stood before it.

“Hamilton!” she faintly said; then extending her hand to him, she burst into a torrent of tears.

For some moments both were too much agitated to speak. She was the first to break silence.

“I trust,” she said, “when my dear Margaret shall pledge her vows to her future husband, she will not feel as I do now.”

Hamilton heard no more, but, imprinting one impassioned kiss on the cold hand he still grasped convulsively, he rushed from the house, and met Margaret

and Mr. Montgomery, when he was still so overwhelmed with the blow he had just received, that he scarcely knew how he reached his home, in which he shut himself hastily, to indulge in that paroxysm of grief, which, long as he had expected the trial, now burst upon him with a violence uncontrollable, and such as he never had anticipated.

But the full extent of his sufferings was as yet unknown, and he had still to learn not only that his best—his fondest, dream of hope was for ever gone, and that she who had broken the spell was as deeply concerned in his wo as himself, and that Margaret—the gay—the light-hearted Margaret had been deceived for years by him—unwillingly, indeed; but still he had the responsibility of wounding such a being, and long and deeply did he lament it; nor could those passions which had once served to beguile his hours of despondency ever restore his peace of mind. He saw in their indulgence the cause of his misfortunes, but he had yet to learn the only means by which he could regain serenity of mind, or obtain strength to meet those trials which were the just reward of a life spent in thoughtlessness and dissipation.

For some hours he paced his solitary chamber, in all the madness of disappointed love and jealous hatred. A thousand hateful imaginations crowded in his mind, nor did he know how the time passed, till wearied and exhausted, he sank down in a chair, and for the first time, rested his eyes on a heap of unopened letters, which his servant had placed upon the table. One of these was written on a deep edged mourning paper, and the large black seal attracted his attention. He tore it open. It was from his friend, Evelyn, the present Lord Ormiston. Many were the tears with which he bedewed the generously dictated lines; and deep and heartfelt was his regret on discovering still farther conviction of the long unseen affection which Margaret had cherished for him.

"Noble fellow," said he, aloud; "God bless and reward him. May he live to claim her love! She will not long continue to think of such a wretch as I am. By heavens, I will not stay another moment in this country to blight her happiness with my hateful presence. I will depart—instantly depart for another land. Perhaps the grave may give me rest, for in this world I never can obtain it. I have wrecked my happiness, but that is nothing. But her!—so sweet—so innocent!—that she should suffer for my sake! I cannot bear to think upon it."

He rung the bell violently, gave orders for instant preparation for departure, and, before evening, was on the road to Dover.

When Mr. Montgomery heard from the servant that General Falkland had gone out, he took Margaret's hand, and whispering quickly to her "You will be best alone—I shall return in the evening," hurried away.

Margaret entered the room where Susan was seated. Her eyes were red with weeping, and she feared to alarm her. But Susan, whose emotion had scarcely subsided, dreaded also to vex her sister by betraying it; and having therefore ascertained that it was her, she began, without looking at her, to say

"You have been a long time, Margaret; I hope the picture is coming on well?"

"Oh! do not talk of pictures, my Susan," said Margaret, throwing herself upon her sister's neck; I wish to talk of something else!"

"And so do I, my dearest," replied Susan, whose tears now mingled with those of her sister; "I have also much to tell you, but it may be said in a few words. Margaret, the die is cast. I am irrevocably engaged to Lord de Tracey. Wish me joy," said she, looking up, and striving to force a melancholy smile, though the constraint but served to fill her eyes with new and bitter tears. "Can you not do so? Surely

at such a moment *you* will give me all your sympathy?"

"Yes!—all, indeed," replied her weeping sister, "more—far more than you think I can bestow;—but it must not be for Lord de Tracey's happiness—it must be for yours, my dearest my best beloved Susan. You do not love him, I know it—I know all. Oh! do not give your hand to one from whom you must withhold your love. Write to him—tell him all, or I will do so. Here," said she, hastily seizing the writing-paper which lay before her, and putting it into her sister's cold hand.

For a moment both were silent. Susan was struck with surprise; she could not imagine how her sister should, in one short morning, have made a discovery of that which the observation of years had failed to reveal. The strong temptation which her energetic affection now set before her was all most too powerful for human nature to resist. Yet how could she blight the joy of one so dear, by even appearing to accede to her generous wish—how could she second a proposition which she could not have accepted till aware of the true object of Hamilton's affection, which she *would* not have listened to, were it to destroy, as she deemed it would, Margaret's happiness.

In that moment of silence she summoned to her aid that grace which teaches to deny self, and when she again spoke, it was not in the language of *assumed* calmness, but with a composure which staggered Margaret's belief in that which she had heard, and which made her unwilling, even for a moment, to impair the prospect of happiness which Susan spoke of as belonging to her union with Lord de Tracey.

"I request, my dear Margaret," said she, kindly folding her sister's hand in both of hers—"I request that this may be the last conversation on this subject—my promise is given—I am already his affianced bride, and time will, I trust, prove me to be his good and faithful wife. My dear father will be so happy when

he knows I have at last acceded to his wishes ; and you, my own sweet Margaret—you will smile upon us also, and join in a blessing on us. Need I say how joyfully I shall hear of the fulfilment of your hopes?—No, for you do not doubt it. If any one should breathe such a suspicion in your case, do not, I entreat, believe in it—believe your own Susan, and you will be happy.”

Margaret was silenced. She could only reply with tears, and it was a relief to her when Susan arose and left the room, saying, that she felt it necessary to be awhile alone.

Will she be deemed selfish or regardless of another's welfare who experiences a mingled emotion of joy and hope, when she finds, or thinks she finds, the sacrifice uncalled for which she was prepared to make? Is it not rather to be expected, even of the most generous and self-denying, that, under such circumstances as Margaret found her sister in, she should have withheld from her the information that morning received of Hamilton's love for her, nor have long hesitated, in obedience to that sister's wish for silence, not to impede the prospect of a union with one whom she esteemed so worthy of her, by revealing a secret fatal to her own peace of mind, and in which she still hoped Mr. Montgomery might have been mistaken.

Occupied with these reflections, and utterly unable to turn her mind to any other, she sat down to inform Mr. Montgomery of what had happened—to acquaint him with her sister's engagement with Lord de Tracey, and to intreat him to be the bearer of the news to Mr. Hamilton.

“I will trust to you,” she said, “for the rest ; you will tell me how he bears it, and on that I will rest my hope.” With an anxious and a beating heart, she despatched her note, and then sat down to wait her father's return. But when she heard the sound of his horses's feet at the door, she felt her courage fail her,

and hastily running to Susan's room, she exclaimed, "Here is my father.—Oh Susan, think yet awhile of what you are about to do—it is still time to alter your purpose—it is still time to save yourself from——"

"Margaret," said Susan, interrupting her with a solemnity of manner which arrested her impetuous, though kind sister, "I thought you had given me your promise to save me from the only thing which I now fear—retrospection. I have chosen for myself—that choice will be sanctioned by a father's blessing—by the voice of an approving conscience. Shall it not also be blest by an only sister's best wishes?"

"Oh yes! it shall—it shall," said Margaret—"bless you—bless *him*, my own dear Susan," continued she, falling on her sister's neck, while mingled tears of admiration, of wonder, and of a hope which she scarcely defined to herself, that all she had heard that day was but a dream—that she herself might be the object of love, and that she should yet evince her devotion to him, in future days of happiness.

A gentle knock at the door disturbed their sympathetic silence. It was General Falkland. As he entered, the bright gleam of joy which suffused his usually pensive countenance was followed by a look of inexpressable tenderness, as he stretched out his arms kindly to his daughters, and folded them together in a long embrace. "God bless my dear child—my sweet Susan—send you every comfort which devoted love can bestow, and make you happy as your fond father desires."

Her heart was full. For a moment every thought, save the happiness of obtaining such a blessing from such a father, faded from her mind, and Susan felt as if that alone must banish every regret, and arm her with fresh zeal for the fulfilment of every duty; and, if she were mistaken in her judgment in accepting the offer of one whom she did not love, from such motives, could she be blamed? could she be denied the

sympathy of the most severe, had any such been acquainted with the struggles of her pure and virtuous mind, and known the power of those gracious principles which actuated each feeling of her heart?

It is, in truth, a dangerous experiment on the tenderness and weakness of woman's nature to enter the bonds of wedded life in the prime of youthful feeling, without "love's sweet constraint" to sweeten those trials of temper and of conduct which must attend the path of every earthly traveller, in whatever situation he be placed, and which, especially in such an one, is so beset with snares and temptations. Let those who, actuated by mercenary or other worldly views, depending upon their own prudence and discernment, undertake so perilous a task, pause ere they rush into such a danger. Let them not fear the reproach of the world in withdrawing a promise made under those mistaken views; but, if they have entered irrevocably on such a path, let them not shun the difficulties which lie before them—let them beware of comparing the merits of the one they have chosen, with those of others, whose love they cannot admit without the transgression of one of the most imperative of God's holy commands. Happy the woman whose tears of regret are restrained by the remembrance of that solemn voice, which we may "hear in *all* things whatsoever he says unto us," and which bids the married wife forsake all others; or if those tears do fall, when it is from the grateful consciousness of having been enabled to tread the path of obedience.

In the keeping of this and every other command, there is indeed a great reward.

Susan was aware of her heart's weakness, and she refused to triumph over it, because, by its indulgence, she might be exposing the vanity of her hopes, and continually impairing the happiness of a beloved sister. She saw in Lord de Tracey only what was amiable in man, and refined in manner, and, although she had

too much diffidence of her own charms to rely upon *them* as the pledge of his constancy, she trusted that she should best be enabled to overcome a fruitless hope, by being removed to another sphere of action.

When Margaret had spoken to her that morning, her thoughts had reverted only to the betrayal of her own affection, which she had most feared, and which she had now dreamed was discovered; but never did it enter her heart to conceive that that love was mutual; and she hoped that, by proclaiming at once the decision she had made with regard to Lord de Tracey, she should silence any suspicion which had arisen in her sister's mind, and leave her to the full enjoyment of an affection which she believed to be warmly returned by Hamilton.

When the burst of tenderness which General Falkland had betrayed on first meeting his daughters had subsided, he resumed his usual placidity of manner, and related with a smile of tranquil content the manner of his becoming acquainted with Lord de Tracey's happy prospects, and of Susan's consent to his long cherished hopes. He had met him, he said as he returned from a Nursery garden at Hammersmith, when he eagerly told him the joyful tale, and besought his easily granted approval.

General Falkland did not long dwell in speech on the satisfaction which his countenance and manner evinced on this occasion, for those who have experienced many of the severest vicissitudes of life are not wont to dwell unnecessarily upon scenes of excitement, whether prosperous or adverse. The long tried heart shuns the unnerving influence of exciting feelings, as far as nature will admit of their doing so, aware that the healthful tone, necessary to correct judgment, can only be obtained by reining in their violence.

General Falkland saw that his daughters required repose, and, recommending them kindly to partake of this hour of joy, with the consciousness of his entire



## FAMILY RECORDS.

With thank and approval, he retired to his own chamber, his heart full of grateful acknowledgment for many mercies, and commending his dear child to the care and guidance of that Providence in which he devoutly trusted.

Blessed moments! The sigh of intercession is never breathed in vain. Who can tell what dangers are averted from us by this unseen incense, which reaches the throne of the Most High, perchance from one unknown, but which we shall recognise in a better world, when love and gratitude shall tune our voices to the song of praise! Let it not be forgotten, in the enjoyment of our choicest mercies, that we may be in part indebted for them to the prayers of others, perhaps unnoticed or despised here; but with whom we shall form sweet companionship, when we shall know as we are known.

Susan, who felt the necessity of solitude to recruit the strength of her spirits, so highly excited on that eventful day, soon left her sister to meditate on the past, and to prepare herself to tread the path of trial she had chosen; but which her sanguine-minded sister hoped might prove a more flowery one than that which seemed to lie before herself.

The agony of suspense which Margaret endured, till she should see or hear farther from Mr. Montgomery, was only relieved by the hope which she would not allow herself yet to dismiss—that she was the object of a reflected light of that flame. Of the once suspected attachment of Susan for him, she now ceased to think. She had but dreamt surely when such a thought awoke in her mind, for the acceptance of Lord de Tracey's offer had for ever silenced such a supposition. With these meditations hours passed away, but no letter from Mr. Montgomery—no news of him arrived—she could bear it no longer, and when evening came, she hastened down stairs, to enquire who had

called that morning on her father. The porter put into her hands a number of indifferent names, which she threw aside disappointed and vexed, and was preparing to cross the vestibule when he said: "Oh! I forgot, madam, a gentleman called about a quarter of an hour since, and inquired very anxiously whether any of the family were at home. As the General had given orders to admit no one, I told him all were out. He seemed much disappointed he had no card, but he left this note for the General." Margaret took it, and hastened with it to her father, for the hand-writing was familiar to her, and it recalled many associations of past days, now endeared to her by the thought that they were perhaps for ever gone. The recollection, too, that she had been the occasion of an unhappiness, which she feared the writer still felt, filled her heart with an interest she could scarcely define; and it was with suppressed breathing, and an averted eye, that she listened as her father read aloud the contents of Evelyn's note.

"I am only in town for a few days, but of course your house is the first I have visited, and I am greatly disappointed to miss the happiness of seeing you. Let me know when I may hope to find you at home. With the offer of my kind remembrance to the Miss Falklands, I remain,

Dear General,

Affectionately yours,

ORMISTON."

General Falkland's face glistened with joy. "How glad I am, my sweet Margaret, that this dear friend should be in town. How provoking that he was not admitted. There, love, do write a line, to beg of him to come immediately; but stay, by the by, we are engaged to dine with the Sherbournes. Well, but perhaps he will come in the evening; will you ask him, love? Margaret hesitated. She did not wish to be

the person to make the invitation, yet feared disobliging her father. "Will you allow me, dearest papa," she said, "to acquaint Susan with his arrival first? She will be so glad, and she, you know, is the eldest, and will be so happy to write to him." "Oh! very well," said the General, glancing smilingly at his daughter, whose confusion he rejoiced to observe, for he trusted it was a symptom of that feeling which he most desired to know she entertained. The happy thought that she should see both his dear children united to those whom he so much loved and esteemed, filled his heart with grateful joy, and, full of serene content, he hastened to his toilette for Lord Sherbourne's dinner, which engagement had, in the excitement of that day, been almost forgotten by himself and his daughters.

As they drove from the door, General Falkland gazed with complacent admiration on his beautiful daughters—more beautiful, if possible, from the simplicity of attire which they had that day selected.

"I think, my loves, you have changed characters this evening, for Margaret looks grave and thoughtful, and Susan smiling as *you* were wont to be; but I can guess the cause, love," added he smiling, and taking Margaret's hand. "But you also shall be happy as she is I trust." Margaret returned the fond pressure, but tears rose in her eyes, and she was glad to change the subject. "I wonder who Lord Sherbourne has invited to meet you, I have no doubt there will be an overflow of savans for your benefit and poor Susan's, and I shall be seated between two old snuffy men, who will give us an account of the different strata of the Himmalaya Mountains, or ask our opinion of the merits of oxygen and hydrogen. You will have the full benefit of Lady Sherbourne's practical exposition of the beauty of silence on one side, and Miss Sherbourne's similies on the other, while Miss Anne will probably be excluded to-day, till the evening, as her father does

not often permit more than one of his daughters to be exposed to comparison with more than one unmarried lady." General Falkland smiled, for the picture was a correct one, but he gently rebuked Margaret for being too severe on his friends.

Susan commented on the beauty of Lord Sherbourne's pictures and mineralogical specimens, and they were soon before his door, and duly announced in presence of their obsequious host, who grasped their hands successively ; but detained Margaret's long after her father and sister had passed on to speak to Lady Sherbourne, till, wondering at the cause of so much extra civility, she turned and beheld with astonishment, the figure of Lord Ormiston, who, while he appeared to be engrossed with her father's conversation, was gazing on her with a look of deep interest. He seemed as if he scarcely knew whether to advance towards her or not, when she also stood irresolute, after shaking hands with Lady Sherbourne and her daughters, and curtsying to the rest of the company who were assembled. The want, however, of any unoccupied chair, save one near the place where he stood, gave her an opportunity of favoring his wishes, without the awkwardness of appearing bashful before so old a friend, and he had pressed her hand, and heard her voice, before she could attend to the loud summons of Lord Sherbourne, to place herself on a couch, which he declared to be the only place fit for her, as she looked so ill. He handed her to it, and placed himself beside her, so effectually to preclude the possibility of approach to any one who dreaded his eloquence as much as Lord Ormiston, apart from any other consideration. Evelyn was soon obliged to direct his attention to Miss Anne, who plied his ear with a sentimental retrospect, in a voice and manner not to be misunderstood, and which plainly told him how much her admiration had increased, since his accession to the title and fortune of his uncle.

Margaret looked at him with a feeling of interest and of pity which she wished not to express; for the thought of him, as the companion of her happy childhood—as the kind friend of her youth—as the amiable and devoted being whom she had rendered unhappy; for while she saw him pale and dejected as he now appeared; and so altered since they last had parted, she could not believe that the reports which had reached their ears, of his projected union with Miss Somerville could be true—or if true, that it could be one which promised him that happiness which she so earnestly desired might be his.

But she was not long permitted to dwell on her own meditations, for the unceasing sound of Lord Sherbourne's voice, in her ear, was occasionally heard in the language of interrogation, to which she was forced to reply, and which gave openings for fresh volleys of flattery, from which she was glad to be relieved by the announcement of dinner. Fortunately for her, a Russian Count and Countess Olinska were of the party, so that Sherbourne gave his arm to the latter. "We shall not wait for Elliott," said he, as he did so; "but I must insist on my friend's obtaining his first notwithstanding. He relinquished another engagement, for the purpose, my dear Miss Margaret, of sitting beside you this evening—you will not disappoint him. "Oh no! certainly," said Margaret smiling, and taking the arm of Count Olinska, as he advanced with "*Aurai je l'honneur?*" The General proceeded with Miss Mitchell, the humble companion of the Countess. Miss Sherbourne followed with a look of triumph, holding the arm of a short, greasy-looking young man, with a broad face curly red head, and large diamond pin, who had been announced as Mr. Jenkins, and on whom she had cast many a languishing and tender smile, to repay him for the frown which Lord Sherbourne had alternately given to him and to his wife ever since his entrance.

Miss Anne followed, very cross at an old hungry looking professor of botany, who declared that the mingled fragrance of turtle-soup and oyster patties was to him far preferable, at that moment, to that of the choicest nosegay; but as she was immediately followed by her brother and Lord Ormiston, she endeavored to preserve the equanimity of her smile, in the hope of placing herself on the other side of so desirable a companion.

In this she succeeded, for the host of black, and snuff colored coats, which followed, were dispersed conveniently, in nobody else's place, and Lord Sherbourne's manœuvres had completely succeeded, with the exception of his eldest daughter's contrivance to be beside the man whom she liked as well as she could care for any one, and for which Lady Sherbourne and this unhappy girl were forced next morning to receive a long and not gentle rebuke.

Scarcely were they seated when a loud knock proclaimed the arrival of Mr. Elliott, who entered with a well assumed air of discomposure, while he apologized for his late appearance by saying that really people were such egregious bores—Lady Fanny Longton wanted him to buy a horse for her, and, when he went to dress, he found such hosts of torments in the shape of three cornered notes that he thought he never should get through them. Monstrous fine woman Lady Fanny—you know her, don't you, Miss Falkland?" said he, taking Margaret's hand with an air of patronizing condescension; "good pedestal—I told her so, and now she is so fond of that little foot of hers, that she wears her drapery *à la Bernoise*, rather too short certainly, but every body knows why she does it, and so it gives her a certain *eclat*. Depend upon it, my dear Miss Falkland," continued he, notwithstanding the look of contempt with which Margaret heard him, "depend upon it, nothing does a girl, or a newly married woman, so much good in the world, as to have

the name of somebody that is known connected with hers, as their friend—Don't be alarmed—I know your charmingly unsophisticated ideas; I do not mean as her *cavalier servente*. No, be assured I could never condescend to undertake such an office, were it to a goddess, but I have spoken of Lady Fanny in such a way that others look at her now, and I really think she will do very well, in spite of the malt scene, which had gone well nigh to make me give her up.” “In spite of what?” said Margaret, who could hardly refrain from smiling at so much absurdity. “The malt scene, but I will tell you about it.” Margaret looked up, and met the gaze of Lord Ormiston, who hastily averted his eyes, and she thought mournfully that she was still beloved. Mr. Elliott went on. “I very weakly consented, when at Lady D——’s last winter, to attend the county ball, where she and a large party were going. Lady Fanny was one of them, after dancing with all the Goths, there, till her face was actually disfigured, by that distressing degree of caloric which can only be produced by that most vulgar of all vulgar things—an English Country dance, she positively declared that nothing would refresh her so much as beer, and proceeded instantly to swallow a large tumbler of that dreadful beverage. I did not speak to her any more that evening, as you may imagine, but I was too good-natured to give her up altogether, and the next day I privately advised her, as a friend, to relinquish these propensities, and I flatter myself she had not again so far transgressed the rules of female propriety.”

“A glass of beer,” said Margaret, “if you please,” turning to the servant behind her chair.—Mr. Elliott stared, and looked aghast: but Lord Ormiston, who had listened to the previous conversation, smiled with a look which Margaret could not misunderstand—which told her, better than words could have expressed, how truly he retained the admiration and the love

which years had fostered, and the cheerfulness which she had for a moment experienced was succeeded by a train of melancholy thought, which rendered her insensible to the neglect with which Mr. Elliott treated her during the remainder of the dinner.

Margaret thought the dessert endless, and Lord Sherbourne's lengthened disquisitions on some antediluvian skeletons of animals, which Professor B—— had that morning lectured upon, scarcely served to beguile the time more pleasantly than the egotism of Mr. Elliott's late conversation. Her attention however was suddenly roused by hearing the latter pronounce a name which could not be uttered without awakening in her breast the most lively emotions. "What a very odd fellow he is," said Mr. Elliott; "he had just settled to go down to Epsom with me next week, and now he is off, Heaven knows where!—to the North Pole for ought I know, but every one knows he's fairly cleaned out."

Margaret's face assumed a deadly paleness—she looked imploringly to Lord Ormiston. Her glance seemed to say: "Could it be true?" Evelyn, whose generous nature prevented his experiencing the triumph which another might have hoped for from such circumstances, felt a thrill of contending emotions which prevented utterance for some time. At that moment Lady Sherbourne gave the signal for the departure of the ladies, and Margaret scarcely knew how her tottering limbs supported her to the drawing-room, where, throwing herself on the first seat, she remained for some moments stupified with wondering grief.

"How pale you are, my dear," said the little shrill voice of Countess Olinska, with her own peculiar foreign accent, which had a kindness grateful to poor Margaret's bewildered senses. "I am afraid you have been too gay lately, and yet I wish you to be more so, for I am going to give a ball, on purpose for your sister and Lord de Tracey; and I hope Lord Ormiston



also will still be in town next week—but I speak too much, you are really ill,” continued she, as she threw her shawl over Margaret’s feet, and put her vinagrette into her hand. “There, my dear, be quiet a little, and I will occupy you, or you will have the whole host of the Sherbournes upon you directly.” So saying, the good-natured Countess placed herself so as to conceal the distressed countenance of Margaret from the rest of the party, and, having particularly requested that nobody might disturb their *tête-à-tête*, she endeavored to direct the mind of her young friend from her melancholy reflections, by her amusing observations on the company they had just left.

“I am very much astonished, my dear, that our good hostess has any children alive.”

“Why?” said Margaret, endeavoring to be attentive.

“Because she does so torment them with over care, they must be bored to death. But what will she make of the youngest progeny? Do you think it possible any girl would consent to take Mr. Jenkins, *pour tout potage*? He really looks too sooty, so black and greasy!”

She continued to rattle on in the same strain, but Margaret’s monosyllables became less and less frequent, at length the good Countess perceived that the hand she had held dropped from her grasp, and the closed lids of poor Margaret’s eyes betrayed that she had fainted.

Susan was by her side in a moment; the usual restoratives were applied, and she rallied, but, notwithstanding many useless entreaties, Margaret was glad to accept Countess Olinska’s offer to take her home in her carriage, in which Susan insisted on accompanying her; and a message was left for the general, when he should come from dinner, to apprise him that fatigue had obliged her to retire thus early.

Aware of the excitement his daughters had gone through that day, the General was not surprised to find it had thus affected them, and he was therefore easily persuaded to remain, for the amateur concert which Lord Sherbourne had prepared, as he thought, with unrivalled skill, for the exhibition of his daughters' talents. One member of the family at least, was made happy on this night, which was looked upon as an eventful one, by the manœuvring old gentleman, from the fact of his having obtained the society of two great matches for his daughters, so free from all rivalry; but alas! it was not in the way he had expected.

Mr. Jenkins proposed to Miss Sherbourne, and was accepted; and, notwithstanding the scolding, and storming of her disappointed father, the tears of Lady Sherbourne, and the sneers of her more fastidious sister, the happy pair were soon after united, and Lord Sherbourne reduced to the consciousness that he had but one forlorn object for his tyranny and his manœuvres to work upon.

## CHAPTER XVII.

" Oh, blame her not, where zephyrs wake,  
The aspen's trembling leaf must shake ;  
When beams the sun through April's shower,  
It needs must bloom the violet flower ;  
And love, howe'er the maiden strive,  
Must, with reviving hopes, revive !"

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THE cause of Mr. Hamilton's sudden departure for the continent remained a mystery to the sisters. In a hasty note to Mr. Montgomery, which the latter showed to Margaret, he said that circumstances connected with his best interests had induced him to make this sudden decision, but declined entering into any explanation, as he said that by him they would be easily understood—he wished not that others should divine them. The world agreed with Mr. Elliott in believing his pecuniary difficulties to be the cause of his sudden departure, but the friends of his youth knew this to be an unfounded surmise. The estate, which he still possessed, would have been sufficient to afford him a life of competent ease in his own country, had he not been swayed by other motives, the nature of which might have been guessed by one sister, and feared by both the Miss Falklands, and they therefore remained silent on the subject. It was the only one on which they each felt constraint—the only one which had ever occasioned an interruption to the interchange of their hearts ; and perhaps, in reality, they better understood one another's sentiments on this subject than they were aware of. Duty and affection, those powerfully-combined motives of action, lent courage to the one, to enter with cheerful composure on the path she had chosen, and supported the endeavors of the other to assume the calmness she could not feel, while a hope, which every outward circumstance seemed to bely, still lingered in her bosom.

It is perhaps the most difficult situation in which to feel and to judge correctly, when with an unfeigned desire to discern the will of Providence, in events which most deeply affect us, we are still left in darkness. Nature's voice will then be heard loudest. Our fondest wishes continually rise before us, dressed in the garb of reality, an imaginative mind regards her illusive pictures as signs of promised fruition, and the heart still clings to objects, which are perhaps never to be obtained—which ought not thus to have distracted that serenity, without which we cannot tread the path of duty as the true in heart would wish to do.

It was thus with Margaret, and though the smiles with which she spoke of her sister's projected marriage, and of the happiness she looked forward to, when, after a short separation, they should again be assembled at Walron castle, concealed her anguish to the world, they could not do so to those who loved her.

She hoped that Susan would not discern the care which corroded her buoyant spirit, and caused the bloom of her cheek to fade away; but she was deceived. She feared at times that it might be so, for she could not discover much of joy in the manner with which Susan listened to her anticipations. She could not discover much of gratified affection, when she saw her with her affianced lover. She could not perceive any eagerness in her mind to accede to Lord de Tracey's frequently urged solicitations that the day of their union might be fixed; and which he pressed the more to avoid a separation which might become unavoidable, since necessary business would soon call him to France, where he possessed an estate lately bequeathed to him, and which he had not yet visited.

Margaret felt unwilling to confess to herself the regret which Evelyn's absence at this time occasioned. During the few days he spent in town, the delicacy of feeling which he had evinced on that trying occa-

sion, when he who knew her heart's secret had witnessed her sorrow ; the kindness with which he had sought to soothe her, without intruding upon her the faintest remembrance of the past, as connected with himself, the benevolent and active endeavors he had used to place Lord de Tracey in the fairest light, to the eyes of his promised bride ; and the pleasure his society had afforded to her beloved father, all conspired to inspire her with regret, when, on the last day of his stay in town, he spent the morning with them, and strove, as he bade them adieu, to do so, without the betrayal of one selfish emotion, and whispering comfort to her, while his own heart was bursting. The wishes for her happiness which he had uttered were such as would have been the death-blow of his own, if he still felt as once he had ; as it is impossible but *once* to feel in this world of changes.

There may be much of passion—much even of real tenderness—much of devoted affection from heart to heart, in a second love ; but where is that fond enchantment, that nameless, but refined, ecstasy which thrills the soul in a first and early love ? Like the first flower of Spring—the first breath of morning—once exhaled it is gone—and for ever. Mid-day may shine more brightly and more lasting beauties may bloom, beneath the fostering ray ; but where is that essence of first love, so fragrant, so pure, so fugitive ? It is gone, never to be recalled.

As Evelyn sat mournfully and alone in the carriage which conveyed him from town, his mind dwelt on the necessity of bidding adieu, for ever, to the blissful dream of his youth ; and, after revolving in what manner he could best secure her happiness whom he prized beyond all else in the world, his thoughts turned to the interesting girl whom he was about to meet.

Lost to happiness himself, he might still, he hoped, secure that of another. The effort was a mighty one

—so to control and school his own feelings that, while he tendered his hand and his heart to the devoted girl, no lurking weakness should betray the sacrifice, either to her, or her father.

Mr. Hamilton had declined his generous offer, in terms of the most heartfelt gratitude, and in such a manner as to raise himself in Evelyn's esteem, and secure his friendship. In this letter he made use of expressions which astonished Evelyn, asserting that he had been mistaken as to the particular interest of his heart; and concluding, by wishing for him that happiness which he had so nobly, under a delusive impression, surrendered to him.

The suspicion to which these expressions gave rise were, however, dispelled by the approaching marriage of Susan, and the long remembered conversation he had had with Margaret, at Walrond Castle, had convinced him of the nature of her sentiments, and the utter impossibility that such could have been entertained had she not known them to be mutual. Her distress at Lord Sherbourne's dinner, on hearing of his sudden departure—the manner in which she had evinced that regret to be the sole cause of her depression of spirits during his stay in town, and the evident gratification she had shewn at the expression of his favorable wishes towards the completion of his hopes—all conspired to remove every doubt from his mind of their mutual love.

Of Caroline Somerville's attachment to himself he could no longer doubt. Her secret had been betrayed; and she could not disguise from less penetrating eyes than those of her anxious father, the cause of her late increase of suffering, which kind friends had not failed to communicate to Lord Ormiston. Aware as he was of the excellence of her principles, the sweetness of her disposition, and the devotion of her heart, he trusted that time might effect that change on his own, which would enable him to lay a better claim

to her affection than he could yet do; and he was now hastening to accept Mr. Somerville's invitation, which had surprised him; because he thought there was a want of delicacy in thus pressing him, with the knowledge he could not but possess of his daughter's feelings, and without the knowledge of their being reciprocal.

It was with a beating heart that Evelyn alighted from his carriage, at the little village of Farnham, and walked towards Mr. Somerville's rectory, where he had, many years ago, spent some happy days; and where nature, decked in her simplest garb, was adorned by the hand of care and order, and smiled then, as now she did, in summer's bright array, yet failed to bestow that peace and serenity which here he had once experienced in the society of his friend. There stood the aged yew tree, bending its melancholy shade over the white gravestones, which a holly hedge encircled with its glossy leaves. There rose the silvery spire, now glistening to the rays of a setting sun. From beneath the clustering evergreens, which twined their branches to the highest windows, he saw the parsonage, with its remembered air of sobriety and repose, beautified at this season by the flowers, which threw their flaunting blossoms round its walls, and decked the neat parterres, which were planted on either side of the walk, to which the neat green wicket opened from the village lane.

The evening song of birds, nestling among the tall elm trees which shaded the green fields beyond; the lowing of cattle, and the distant shouts of children returning from school, were the rural sounds which alone greeted his ear, as he advanced and paused, with the fulness of his heart, to meditate on all that had passed since the last time he had visited this beautiful and sequestered spot, to which his imagination had often fondly turned, connected with one whom he knew to be a stranger to the quiet beauties of En-

lish scenery, and which he had once allowed himself to hope he might have enjoyed with her.

It was an hour in which to dream of days gone by. Who has not enjoyed the luxury of such contemplations, even when the retrospect is most painful? It is so soothing; and to the religious mind so peace-breathing. And it is at such an hour the bruised in heart have often experienced the consolations which they alone can know.

When Evelyn reached his friend's door, he felt more able to overcome every selfish regret than he could have expected; and it was the utterance of his heart, when he expressed his joy to his revered friend, at finding himself once more beneath his hospitable roof.

Mr. Somerville was much changed since they parted, although so short a time had elapsed. The benign expression of his countenance was endeared by that touching sorrow, which a parent's ear never fails to claim from sympathising hearts; and, as he spoke of Caroline, the tears crowded down his cheeks, with such affecting, yet such chastened, grief, that Evelyn felt how great a blessing it might be in his power to bestow.

"Shall I not see her to-day?" inquired he, with an interest which increased the pressure of her father's hand, as he held Evelyn's in his.

"I will go and prepare her," rejoined Mr. Somerville, "for so agreeable a surprise; but she has scarcely risen from her sofa this last fortnight, and the doctor has enjoined an absence of all excitement. However, she cannot long remain in ignorance of your arrival; and I so earnestly hoped that you would not disregard my invitation, that I have already endeavored to prepare her to meet you.

So saying, Mr. Somerville left the room, and Lord Ormiston threw himself on a sofa, and gazed around him as one in a dream. There was something in the



very tranquillity of the scene which encouraged that dreaminess of thought, which sometimes attends those whose hearts have been much exercised by contending feelings, and from which it is difficult to be aroused, till necessity for action compels us to realise, as it were, our mental powers, for the welfare of others, if not for ourselves.

There stood Mr. Somerville's arm-chair, placed beside a couch on which Caroline's shawl was left, as if she had been lately present. A bible lay beside her father's chair, and his spectacles marked the place where he had been reading. The piano-forte was open, and flowers thrown on the music that lay on the desk. On one table the dress of a cottager's child, partly unfinished, was placed carefully by the books and vases which alternately adorned it. The windows opened to the ground, and the fragrance of mignonette, mingled with that of the Scot's roses, which he had given to Miss Somerville, and which now bloomed around the porch, wafted to and fro through the air.

The room had an air of elegance, such as female care can alone cast over daily habitation, and sanctified, as Evelyn knew that dwelling to be, by piety and virtue, he felt the serene influence of these qualities as breathing over every object, and shedding its blessedness on his own heart.

The door opened softly, and, leaning on her father's arm, Caroline entered the apartment. Lord Ormiston strove to utter something of the happiness of being again in her society, but the words died away on his lips. *She* could not speak, but as if gathering her utmost power to breathe the sigh of joy, which was too much for her, she stretched out her pale hand towards him, and, almost borne by her father, she reached the sofa on which she was wont to recline. Her tall figure, which before seemed to belong to one of ærial birth, than to immortality, was reduced to a still more shadowy appearance. The flush, which mantled on

her pale cheek, settled the alarming brilliancy, and lit up her sunken blue eyes to a starry brightness. Lord Ormiston was shocked beyond the power of utterance; for who that has ever gazed on the ravages which consumption makes on the young and beautiful, but has experienced a mournful interest, uncontrollable by any effort of reason, unlike that which aught else can inspire, and which, connected as it is with the *certainly* of an event, which in other cases, hope whispers may still be averted, fills the mind of the beholder with those reflections which awe, yet purify, the soul.

No longer did he regard her as the being for whom he must surrender every other hope; nor with any other emotion save that of the tenderest pity—endear- ed by that most endearing of all sensations, the consciousness that he possessed the power of sweetening the remainder of her days on earth, and smoothing the pillow of a sickness, which was soon to be the means of conveying her beyond the reach of worldly care or sorrow.

Not thus did she regard the being on whom her pure heart's strongest affection had been bestowed. With the fallacious impression, which the nature of her disease carries to the mind of its victim, she read in Evelyn's affectionate countenance and tender manner, the earnest of that which she had never ceased to hope for, and, brightened as her anticipations were, by the presence of her beloved one, her strength seemed to rally each moment, and she spoke on every subject with an energy and vivacity which astonished and delighted her father. Again his hopes of her recovery returned, and again and again he thanked Evelyn, as being the means of restoring his child to his love and his care.

Days and weeks passed on, and found him still watching by the side of Caroline, till he almost partook of the delusiveness of her own thoughts, and imagined she was gradually recovering.

There was upon her beautiful countenance a radiance which, though it at times appeared unearthly, was called forth by no other sentiment save that of woman's love. So high and holy indeed is this affection in the breast of one pure and young as Caroline Somerville, so intimately connected with aspirations after all that most dignifies and ennobles human purpose, that we cannot behold such a nature rendered happy in the indulgence of so refined a feeling, without admiring the goodness of our Divine Creator, who has been pleased to sanctify and to bless, by his approval, a sentiment which, when entertained by virtuous minds, strengthens every holy resolve, and sheds a halo over the most trifling circumstances of human life.

With what a heightened pleasure did Caroline now receive the visits of her father's poor parishioners, and hear the blessings poured down on her beloved one, who had, since his arrival in that village, taken the place of Caroline in visiting and relieving the sick and aged; and assisted her in every plan she had formed, but been unable, since her increased weakness, to execute, for their comfort and support. How did she now enjoy the morning hours, when permitted to walk around her little garden, or to sit in the flowery arbour at noon, while Evelyn read aloud to her. Sometimes she sang with her guitar, with that peculiar clearness which often renders the voice of those who suffer as she did, so peculiar and beautiful. With what delight did she witness the restoration of her father's happiness, who now daily, more and more, indulged the fond hope that she was indeed gradually recovering, and beheld, in Lord Ormiston, the future husband of his child, and the comfort of his own declining years.

Mr. Somerville had once entertained some fears respecting the former attachment of Lord Ormiston, but the report which he had in a conversation one day with him was confirmed by the latter, of the Miss Falkland's marriage, had served to dispel that fear ;

besides which, he could not imagine that one so honorable, as he knew his friend to be, would have placed himself in his present situation—in daily, almost hourly, intercourse with Caroline, did he not entertain for her those feelings and intentions which he trusted would one day, with her returning health, be realized.

As time wore on, Lord Ormiston himself removed from Mr. Somerville's mind the remaining distrust which his silence might have created. Caroline's improved appearance, united to the glow of happiness which his presence and unvarying kindness threw over her beautiful countenance, deceived him no less than her apparent increase of strength did her father and herself; and he felt himself called upon no longer to keep them in suspense as to his intentions. In a letter which he received one day, about six weeks after his arrival at Farnham, from General Falkland, he read the following words:—

“My dear Susan is to be united to Lord de Tracey in a few days, and I need not tell you how happy I feel in the bright prospect which opens before that dear child. Her spirits have been lately much depressed, no doubt from the delay which she has feared, owing to Lord de Tracey's necessary journey to France, but which his solicitations have persuaded me to prevent, by fixing the day of their union. She suffers also, I am grieved to say, from witnessing her dear sister's regret in the absence of our friend Mr. Hamilton. I have long attempted to blind myself to their attachment, but it is one, I fear, not to be overcome either by absence, or the disapprobation of a parent. I will not, however give up the hope that time may effect a favorable change on the tastes and habits of that amiable but imprudent young man, and I shall then no longer feel it a duty to withhold my consent from the fulfilment of their wishes, which God grant may be for that dearest one's happiness. I had on—  
hoped she might set her affections on one more w

of her; but that hope is passed—she has confessed all to me, and I have suffered too much in my youth, from a similar disappointment, to wish to blight a young heart by that most bitter sorrow. God bless my dear Evelyn, and send you all that is best for you, and all that I judge you to be so worthy of.”

Lord Ormiston was drawing beside Miss Somerville when the letter arrived. She had requested him to execute a plan for a cottage, which her father had promised her to build for a poor parishioner, and she looked at his work, as it proceeded, with that interest which all he did excited. She watched his countenance as he read, and observed the changing lines of his expressive face with eager enquiry. He folded the letter, and tried to continue his occupation, but his hand shook, and he found it vain to proceed.

“I wish,” he said, rising and going towards the window, “I wish the rain would cease, for I feel as if the air would be so pleasant.”

Caroline sighed—it was a deep and melancholy sigh, and he turned towards her. Her face was hid in her hands, and her color mounted to her temples till the transparent veins seemed as if they would burst.

“Miss Somerville, are you ill,” said Lord Ormiston, advancing to the sofa, and holding Eau de Cologne towards her, “let me give you some of this,” he said, “to put upon your forehead; these mild wet days do not agree with you, I fear.” As she lifted her hand from her face, Evelyn saw she was weeping; the big tear rolled down her cheek, and she was unable to reply. “Tell me,” said he, tenderly, “what has caused your emotion? I trust I have not done or said anything to grieve you; believe me such was far from my intention.”

“No,” said Caroline, with strengthening breath, “you have indeed been all that is kind and gentle, and good—would to God! you were as happy as you deserve.”

"And am I not happy, *déar Miss Somerville*," said Evelyn, with a mournfulness which was itself an answer to his question, "am I not happy in possessing such dear friends, in flattering myself that even *my* society is of some use to them?"

"Thank you, thank you; heaven knows what use you have been to my beloved father—what comfort, what happiness to myself"

She blushed deeply, and again averted her tearful face, for she feared she had been too ingenuous; "but when I see you thus harassed as you are by emotions which, for the sake of others, you strive to conceal, can I cease to sympathize with one who deserves my sympathy, though he will not deem me worthy of his confidence?"

"Miss Somerville," said Lord Ormiston, taking her cold hand in his, and speaking with a voice and manner which seemed to struggle vainly for composure: "I have waited for strength more confirmed, and of longer duration than I can yet hope you possess, to impart to you that which I have the presumption to think might not be a matter of indifference to you; but since your kindness has condescended to observe, and to regret, that my heart has been exercised by trying emotions, the nature of which you have been hitherto ignorant of, and that you will look upon their disclosure as a proof of my regard, I will no longer withhold my secret. I feel deeply convinced that to no woman more high-minded than yourself could a man intrust his happiness and his honor did he feel worthy of seeking to obtain so dear a privilege with an undivided heart. Such a heart may proudly look towards a hope replete with so much happiness, enriched, as you are, dear Miss Somerville, not only with nature's loveliest gifts, but with so pure a heart—so sweet and angelic a temper, and such a heavenly mind."

"Nay," said Caroline, smiling through the tears that flowed fast as he spoke, "do not so flatter me;

my ear is but little used to such courteous phrases as these, and my heart disapproves of them as untrue."

"No," replied Evelyn gravely, "I would not flatter you; I speak not now in trifling language to beguile an hour; I would that my feelings were thus free to court the blandishments of such society as your's with a heart entirely unreserved. But that time may come. I leave the result of my future happiness in your hands. Caroline, I have loved another—you are acquainted with my early history. You know that since the loss of my parents, I dwelt beneath the roof of General Falkland, from childhood, almost till now, with the exception of those partial absences which visits to my relations and friends, and occasional short tours on the continent, occasioned. With his daughters I was brought up as a brother, but time revealed to me the secret of my love, and months and years spent in the society of her on whom I lavished, ere I was well aware of it, my heart's first and strongest affections, nourished the fruitless passion. It was not returned—I read my doom in her affection for another—I heard it from her own lips. Since that time I have striven to overcome an attachment which Providence seemed to oppose, and I have in part succeeded, but the memory of the past will return, even when blest with another hope, dear enough to banish sorrow from the heart of any one who resolved to entertain it. Proud enough to dare me thus to humble myself before you, and having confessed the secret of my former unhappiness, to seek to render myself worthy of suing for the hand of one so pure, so worthy of all that is best, as you are. I will not deceive you. Had I not been made acquainted with the determination of Miss Falkland (Evelyn spoke with increased agitation) to unite herself with the man of her choice, I had not presumed to betray to you what I have done. Honor had forbade the disclosure, for I do not believe that any other event could have enabled me to triumph over

my regrets. You saw me first under other circumstances—you then might judge what alone could have withheld me from uniting that affection which may well inspire to the admiration I could not but entertain for your beauty and your virtues. Say, Caroline, do you think, in future days, you could feel towards me as I have the presumption to think you once did? Can you accept of a blighted heart such as I have to offer? If the tenderest care, the most unremitting attention to your every wish could give you happiness, I shall find it mine to bestow such on one worthy of far beyond that which I can ever offer."

Long before Evelyn ceased to speak, the emotion of poor Caroline's heart betrayed more than the words with which she strove to reply to his communication, and with mingled tears of joy and sorrow, she confessed her long cherished affection for him, and her earnest hope that she might yet live to be all to him which he had lost, though, in her humility, she expressed and felt how ill the daughter of a village clergyman could seek to compete with one of high birth, and of refinement and beauty, so much exceeding what she could pretend to.

Mr. Somerville was soon after informed by his young friend of what had passed, and with a serene trust, such as those whose minds are chastened, like his, to receive every intelligence of earthly concern for his beloved one's future peace and comfort, he blest them both with heart and voice, and returned to the duties of his calling, more and more penetrated with a sense of the love and goodness of his Divine Master.

"And is it possible," said Caroline, one day, as she placed a bunch of flowers, she had just gathered, in Evelyn's hand, "is it possible that she did not love you?"

Lord Ormiston's face grew deadly pale. "Hush, dear Caroline," said he, "you have taught me, already



—still teach me to forget that which I *must* not.....” here he paused,—“which I *would* not remember.”

Caroline sighed deeply, and entered the house. “The evening is so beautiful,” she said, I “should like to stay out, but I fear a return of my cough. Perhaps you will read to me.” The windows were closed—she heard Evelyn’s voice and was again happy.

Like the sobbings of an infant, the tears, which his words had occasioned a moment before, were dried as quickly; and when Evelyn paused from his reading, to look upon her, she had sunk into a gentle sleep.

END OF VOL I.



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**FAMILY RECORDS;**

100.35 OR

**THE TWO SISTERS.**



BY

**LADY CHARLOTTE BURY.**

**IN TWO VOLUMES.**

**VOL II.**

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**1841.**



# FAMILY RECORDS.

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## CHAPTER I.

“Grande, est dit on, la difference  
Entre le mariage et l’amour.”

OLD SONG.

“WHAT a deuced bore that eternal punch is,” said Mr. Elliott to his country friend, Mr. Richardson, as he ventured beneath the shade of his cabriolet to drive him through Jermyn-Street, between the hours of eleven and twelve one fine morning in August: “confound that fellow’s eloquence who persuaded the house, against their sober senses, that it was not a regular nuisance; and multiplied the number of thieves and pick-pockets, for the sake of seeing his children clap their noisy hands, as the devil made away with the long-nosed screeching vagabond. Confound him! a man cannot drive his cab, even at this hour, for the mob.” So saying, he again lashed his whip over his unfortunate horse, who plunged and kicked at the indignity; but, with more judgment than his angry driver, refused to trample under foot those who required more time than Mr. Elliott was willing to allow to make way for the passage of *his* cabriolet.

“I think you are mistaken for once, my good friend,” said Mr. Richardson coolly, and thrusting out his red nose to ascertain the cause of their detention. “There *is* somebody going to be hung, but it is not my old favorite punch this time; and faith I should like to know who it may be, for see what brilliant equipages and tawdry favors, and bright nose-gays.

Egad, Elliott, I must be out, and see the fun; for I love a wedding, and I may perhaps get asked to the feast."

"I should think not," replied his companion sulkily, and glancing with a look of withering contempt at his friend's figure, as he saw him fighting his way through mechanics, chimneysweeps, butcher boys, and flower girls, &c., to the church door. "I should think no one but myself could bear the presence of such a tiger—certainly not on their wedding day." In truth the appearance of the honest-hearted little Irishman could not, at first sight, prepossess the beholder with as favorable an impression towards him, as his inward worth deserved.

Beneath a light blue frock coat, so scantily fashioned that the brass buttons could scarcely meet their intended inclosures, over his robust little figure shone a bright yellow cloth waistcoat, discovering a red one of equal brilliancy. The preposterous size of his feet and hands was alike observable, from the extreme shortness of his trowsers and his sleeves; and a very old white hat was so placed upon his conical-looking head as to occasion some doubts respecting the civility of his late associates, or of the security of its position in case of a false step. When Mr. Elliott paused, however, to glance from his absurd looking figure to the livery of the coachman, who sat proudly on the brocaded box of the nearest carriage quaffing a large draught of porter from a pewter pot, and adorned with a huge shining favor, the current of his thoughts was changed, and, calling to his boy to hold the reins, he soon found himself in as close contact with the curious mob as Mr. Richardson, and in a few moments he had actually joined in church the kneeling throng before the altar.

He felt a strange sensation as he beheld the beautiful form of Susan Falkland beside that of Lord de Tracey, and as he heard the solemn voice of the dig-

nified looking clergyman, who officiated, requiring of her the response to the awful question:—"Wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband, &c., till death do you part?" and then placing the pledge of vows so consecrated upon her trembling hand.

Through the veil which partially concealed a countenance, on which none could look without a peculiar interest, no trace of tears were to be seen; but white as the soft drapery which concealed her sylph-like form, she was more like the imagination of a dream than a being of this earth. She seemed almost afraid to breathe, lest emotions, too powerful to be betrayed to any eye, save One unseen, should obtain a mastery over the sense of that imperious duty which she had just sworn to fulfil. Even those who gazed with indifference on the expression which pervaded every feature, feared for the future happiness of a bride who could so look on her wedding-day; but there was beside her one whose nature was too impetuous, too tender to mark a sister's struggles with suppressed feeling. It was in vain that Margaret strove to recal to mind the many virtues and endearing qualities which she thought Lord de Tracey possessed. It was in vain that she contrasted the charm of his outward appearance with the inferiority of others. She *knew*, for woman can not remain deceived in such concerns—she *knew* that Susan did not love him. She saw it in the composure which she had assumed ever since he had been accepted, and which she had carefully preserved till this eventful day. She heard it in the deep groan extorted from a bursting heart, at the hour of night when she thought that all beside were sleeping. She guessed it from the passive acquiescence she had given to all who had offered her their congratulations with the same voice and manner respecting her future happiness—the splendour of her trousseau, and her husband's beauty. She saw it in the straining eyes with which she arose from her morning and evening

prayer, when, softened by the remembrance of unchanging love, she wept upon her sympathising breast.

Alas! too well she knew that poor Susan had entered on this engagement with a heart withered and blighted by an untold sorrow; and, as she knelt beside the now united pair, and heard the solemn blessing, her fears far anticipated her hopes, and she sobbed with uncontrollable emotion. Her father gave his daughter away with a parent's trust and joy which brought the tear to his eye, and again he covered his face with his hands, and prayed as calmly, as fervently as before.

He gently chided Margaret for giving way to her feelings, and when the bridal party moved to the vestry-room, and he marked the trembling hand of Susan, he almost looked severely at Margaret, for causing her increased agitation; and with more tenderness than before, again clasped Susan to his heart.

The anguish so long suppressed now burst forth, and, with a scream which rang through the aisles, which had lately echoed to the solemn voice of the clergyman, she sank in death-like paleness in his arms, imploring that there she might die. With a presence of mind for which few could have given her credit, Margaret succeeded in so occupying those who crowded around as to conceal from them the purport of the words she had spoken. Insensibility soon succeeded, and Susan was borne home, supported by General Falkland and Margaret, who, almost paralyzed with terror and dismay, used their faint endeavors to restore a consciousness which she had wished might never return.

The crowd of gay friends, who had been invited to the wedding *déjeuner*, assembled with other expectations than they had realized, and thought it was more kind to separate as soon as possible, since they who had appointed the entertainment were unable to preside.

"Faith!" said Mr. Elliott, as he followed Lord de Tracey from the church-door to his carriage, into which he stepped uninvited, "this is a deuced hasty separation, but I hope she will soon be much better—a little agitation—that's all very natural, but what a bore those *first loves* are!"

"What?" said Lord de Tracey, his face kindling with indignation.

"Yes," replied the cowardly Mr. Elliott, who thought it high time to eat his words—"she is your first love, is n't she?"

Lord de Tracey was pacified, or seemed to be so. "I do n't wish any questions, if you please, Elliott," rejoined Lord de Tracey; "you know," said he, smiling good-naturedly, and striving to shake off the painful impression which the illness of his bride had occasioned; "you know, I have already answered so many to-day."

"Oh, certainly," said Mr. Elliott, humming an Opera tune.

\* \* \* \*

"Pon honor dear, Lord de Tracey, do you know I have some thoughts of marriage, myself, but hang ceremonies, I abominate them. They are so deucedly troublesome, and a woman never looks well with red eyes and swollen cheeks. Why, positively, Margaret, who is usually such a fine girl, looked downright hideous—did n't you think so?"

Lord de Tracey heard him not, and he was saved the trouble of a reply, for the carriage stopped, and in a moment he was at the door of his bride's chamber.

"I shall stay here till they are off," said Lord Sherbourne, as he handed his wife and daughters into their carriage, among the last of those who, having provided themselves with a comfortable luncheon, departed, to circulate among their acquaintances the account of the sombre wedding.



"I shall certainly stay, because I don't like to leave old friends, when I think I may be of use." Occupied with the contemplation of his thin legs, which were that day adorned with more than ordinary care, Lord Sherbourne scarcely perceived General Falkland, as he advanced towards him in the entrance hall.

"Your lordship is very kind," said he, with a courtesy which few would have resisted; "but I fear my dear girl is scarcely able to bear parting with her sister and myself in the presence of any other person."

"Oh! but such an old friend as I am," said Lord Sherbourne, still advancing, and laying his hand on the General's shoulder, with an air of patronising condescension; "she will not mind *my* presence, I am sure; and I really cannot allow myself to leave you at such a moment." (Lord Sherbourne had already transferred his attentions towards General Falkland in favor of his *youngest* daughter) "beside you see Anne will not rest to-night, unless I can apprise her of Lady de Tracey's complete recovery." So saying, he re-entered the drawing-room, and actually contrived to detain General Falkland until his daughter's entrance. The travelling carriage was at the door—the servant and maid in readiness on the box. Lord de Tracey's countenance was colorless; and an expression which General Falkland had never seen there now filled him with doubts, to which he had until then been a stranger. Susan had recovered some degree of composure; but scarcely trusting herself to return the affectionate embrace of her parent and her sister, or to reply to the convulsed eagerness with which Margaret bade her write to them very soon; she felt the presence of so indifferent a person as Lord Sherbourne was a restraint for which she was thankful; and, giving a smile to the assembled servants, as she passed to her carriage, the marriage cortège was soon followed by the wondering gaze of the idle crowd, as they proceeded on the Dover road.

Again and again the mind of Lord de Tracey reverted to the words which Mr. Elliott had spoken. The silent abstraction with which his bride sat beside him did not tend to lessen the painful impression. He had not indeed been ignorant of her attachment to Mr. Hamilton; for his jealous eye had long perceived that to which her parent had remained a stranger. It was, therefore, the feeling of agonised regret which a mind of more refinement than his would have experienced, at such a discovery, on *such* a day: he had been fully aware, when he sought the hand of Susan, that there was in her heart a secret for which he could not seek the explanation; but his pride was deeply wounded to think that others were also acquainted with her love for his rival; and on this day, to which he had looked as one of triumph, not only in securing for ever the object of his passionate admiration, but in the defeat of one for whom he entertained a strong dislike, he suffered perhaps more bitterly than he who mourned in absence the destruction of his dearest hopes.

And is it not ever thus that hopes which have been awakened by the mere impulse of human passion, which have been cherished by the bare ambition of seeing them realised on the downfall of another's happiness; and which are not, in short, hallowed by virtuous motives, fail in their fulfilment to bestow the anticipated bliss? Is it not thus the deceived and disappointed, who have not learned the fallacy of building on such unhallowed dreams, turn again and again to other objects in the same presumptuous spirit; and then exclaim against the wrongs they have suffered, and the bitterness which has been infused into their every draught, while they themselves have prepared the poison. But happier those who view their own faults reflected in such disappointments, and who strive to set out with a better spirit, in the path which they had once traced in the wilfulness of kinder passion.

Lord de Tracey gazed upon his bride: she smiled kindly on him, and Elliott's words, together with the remembrances they had renewed, were again forgotten. Susan recalled the vows she had made, the resolutions she had so long determined—so long prayed that she might fulfil; and, summoning every energy of her being, she exerted herself to speak, and to look as if she were happy; but who has not experienced the difficulty of hiding the traces which such tears leave behind them?

It seemed as if those eyes which had so wept refused to beam again, even when the sunshine of serene contempt essayed to dry them; but when the heart is still oppressed—when every outward circumstance continues to remind it of its anguish, it is indeed hard to look with composure on the object which has occasioned our wretchedness. To some it might appear the more difficult because such would be their duty.

But not so to Susan. Already she thought of Lord de Tracey as her husband, whom she had sworn to love and to obey. Already did she honor him, for she esteemed him worthy of her regard; and, when he kindly besought her to dry her tears, with the consciousness of possessing his devotion and his love, she fervently hoped that the hour might come when that knowledge would enable her to do so with as much grateful joy as she now strove to do from principles of duty alone.

There can be few separations more painful than that which sisters, who have lived together from infancy, are called upon to endure when new ties divide them, and call for the exercise of other duties. Even to the woman who leaves the happy home of her childhood, from the free and unrestrained impulse of a new and engrossing feeling, there will recur moments of solitude and thoughtfulness, when the heart fondly returns to that loved spot, our first home, en-

deared by a thousand associations of affection; and he who loves his wife with the most fervor will feel more securely the strength of her attachment to himself in proportion as he discovers in that heart the warmth of mutual affection, which cannot part from a parent and a sister without regret, and who cannot recall, even in that society which she has preferred to every other, the memory of their tenderness, with grateful tears.

But how much will she, who no longer sees in that home the companion of her childhood—the friend of her youth—who misses at every moment the sympathy of a heart ever open to attend to every trivial interest of the passing hour—how will she lament the separation? How will she look around the vacant chamber, where so lately a sister's presence threw a sunshine over each inanimate object? How will her thoughts revert with anxious solicitude to the oft repeated question, "Is she happy?" How will the doubt be resolved by the fervent prayer that she may indeed be blessed in that new tie which has divided them!

It was thus that Margaret concluded her mournful meditations, as she sat pensively alone in her chamber, on the evening of her sister's marriage, until, worn-out by the fatigue and excitement she had undergone, she sunk into a profound sleep.

But, oh! the sad, sad waking, when she again recurred to the uncontrollable anguish of that cry, when Susan had thrown herself on her father's neck; and remembered the suppressed agony depicted in her smile, as she bade them adieu. Again the suspicion of the truth recurred to her mind, that he whom she loved so devotedly—he who had left them the very day after Lord de Tracey was accepted—he was the cause of all this anguish; and her own blindness—her own selfish feelings—had combined to render her beloved sister the victim of an unhappy marriage.

But if such were indeed the case, it was irremediable, and what remained for her but to seek to imitate the high-minded devotedness of her Susan? She was now the only solace of her father's declining years, and she inwardly resolved to bury the secret in her aching heart—to overcome, for his sake, an attachment which she knew was a grief to him; and to live only for his happiness and comfort.

A thousand daily trifling duties now opened upon her which had before been divided between her sister and herself; and she felt it necessary, as well as becoming, to fulfil them with cheerfulness. There was a consciousness in her mind that on her exertions depended his serenity and comfort, which she could not have seen impaired without experiencing the deepest regret and self-reproach; and she, therefore, seconded every hope that the General expressed of her sister's happiness with Lord de Tracey; and strove to appear as light and gay in heart as ever, concealing from him the anxiety she could not but experience on the subject of Mr. Hamilton's absence.

General Falkland's house became more than ever the resort of the gay and fashionable. The *season* had lasted longer than usual, owing to public business being prolonged; and there was scarcely a fête champêtre, a water party, or a wood party, for which Margaret was not recherché, as the most lovely, the most ornamental, of that usually neglected tribe, in fashionable circles, young ladies. There was a degree of éclat attendant on her sister's marriage, which brought her more into notice than even the influence of her own charms had excited in the minds of those who hope that a reflection of that kind of interest may return on themselves, by seeming to be intimate with the persons who have awakened it; and though many complained in secret of the reserve which Margaret failed not to evince towards those who sought to inquire into the private feelings of Lady de Tracey; words which she had never uttered, and innuendoes which she had never

thrown out, were whispered and repeated in bou-  
doirs, in drawing-rooms, at riding parties, and wa-  
ter parties, till Lady de Tracey was spoken of, as  
"Poor dear!"—"Beautiful victim!"—"She was al-  
ways quite alone."—"But how I doat on her now she  
is unhappy!"—and so on; till Margaret heard the re-  
port, and then she felt she had a just reason for en-  
treating her father to return to Walrond, and thus by  
absence to silence the curiosity of the idle crowd.  
While she thanked him again and again for his kind-  
ness in thus lingering for her sake, in scenes of gaiety;  
she assured him, with how much truth he scarcely  
knew, how much happier she should be in the country  
than in the brightest ball-room in town.

"Well, my queen," said the General, kindly, "I am  
happy that such should be your choice, though, I fear,  
you will be very dull there, now, without Susan; you  
have hardly allowed *me* to miss her society, but I hope,  
for your sake, she will soon join us again."

"Oh!" said Margaret, sighing, "you know, dear  
Papa, her last letter was from Paris; Lord de Tracey  
did not expect his castle would be ready for her for a  
month, at least, and he wished her to remain there  
sometime, so I fear we have no hopes of her this  
year."

"Very true, love," said General Falkland; "well,  
spring returns, and so will *she*, when you have fed the  
robins and Mary's bairn; for she has one by this time,  
of course; and then you must have a brighter color  
in those cheeks, or my friend Montgomery will never  
be pleased: do you know, my dear, he has positively  
consented to accompany us home, so I must be off,  
and settle the day of our departure with him: and do  
you, dearest, see that you amuse yourself with the good  
Countess Olinska, and mind you ask her to come to  
Walrond as soon as she can." So saying, General  
Falkland mounted his horse, and Margaret hastened  
to obey a wish which she had as much at heart as her  
kind father.

There was a charm about the Countess which few could wholly resist, though still fewer were able to appreciate it as it deserved, for, while the courtliness and courtesy of her manner conveyed to all in her society that most agreeable of sensations—being pleased with self; and though her unfailing good humor and cheerfulness shed on all within her influence something of that sunshine which pervaded her own breast, it required to be acquainted with the motives by which she was actuated, and the many trials through which she had passed, with unblemished character, and unstained heart, fully to value the worth, which threw over a person, unadorned by outward attractions, a spell of enchantment which was increased in proportion as she was known.

Margaret obtained the privilege of this excellent woman's intimacy and friendship, and it was one for which she had, through life, cause to be grateful. She found it her most delightful resource after her sister's marriage, in those hours when she was necessarily divided from her father. With the London world in general, she felt but little congeniality, but she was not so narrow-minded as to view it with the eye of prejudice.

No longer now did Margaret sigh in solitude during her morning hours (for though in town she was one of those who actually took the benefit of the morning hours), and while she turned the leaves of her book, lament the absence of one who was ever wont to sympathize with her in the expression of sentiments, often experienced, but which, till then, she failed to find words for. She might explain her views on general subjects without fear of being misunderstood, or intending something that was personal. How often does this fear prove a barrier to freedom of intercourse, and what tact is necessary to suppress the expression of such a thought, where an insight into character, or a knowledge of peculiar circumstances, enable us to

perceive what has originated the train of particular thought, which thus vents itself in general observations.

Countess Olinska had the advantage of both these, but she never made use of her knowledge to intrude upon her young companion; the consciousness of such being the case, and while Margaret enjoyed the benefit of her excellent judgment, in the kind advice which she gave in more palatable garb, she was never agitated by that nervous tremour which a more literal person had adduced by the mention of facts or feelings which she wished by such a friend might be understood, but not described.

The Countess drew around her a circle which differed widely from those which generally frequent the boudoirs of fashionable women. It was not with her, with as many of that class, sufficient recommendation that a young man should possess such superior outward attractions as to render his unmeaning simper or nod of intimacy the envy of the fair and young, although even these aspired to be among the number of her intimates, and boasted of becoming so, because to none, except the perseveringly vicious, would she bestow her contempt. Nor did she court the society of men of superior age, and exalted rank, from the mere fact of their being favorites at Court, or looked up to as men of power in the political world. With some of these, indeed, her talents, and the power she possessed of adapting these to subjects of all kinds, in the most agreeable manner, had placed her on a footing of intimacy which spread many an envious whisper through the world of the influence she exercised over Lord —, and Mr. —, and Colonel —, in their political opinions; but never did the character, which was dignified by her own acknowledged excellence, and high principles, and supported by the confidence and love of her husband, suffer even from these imputations; the merely frivolous and gay of her own



sex did not often appear where they found so little of similarity, in mind and manner, to attract them; but among the virtuous and good, of the most exalted in rank, among the talented and clever of all ranks, ages, and sex, there are sufficient in the London world to form society, the most enchanting—the most improving; and of such was the Countess Olinska's composed. Among these was Margaret daily received. Her simple manners—her unaffected modesty—her dignified suppression of thoughts and feelings to which so many of her age and sex give utterance, in the exuberance of youthful spirits, to the annoyance of those grown wiser, rendered her presence a pleasing addition to the conservation of those whom her timidity made her fear to converse with herself, because it served to heighten the spirits of the amiable Countess, while it gratified her visitors and friends.

There were some, indeed, who frequented her house, from the sole motive of meeting there one so lovely and attractive as Miss Falkland, and this was perhaps the only drawback to Margaret's undivided enjoyment, because, whenever she discovered herself to be the object preferred among the young of the other sex, her heart turned with a stronger sentiment to him whom still she loved with all the intense devotion which absence, to a doating heart, but serves to strengthen and confirm.

Of these the Duc de Chatelain, a very young French nobleman, and Lord Frederick Ashton, were the sources of the most disquiet to her generous mind, because in the one she perceived an unsophisticated nature, and warmth of heart, which she grieved to see were engaged in a manner which she felt it impossible to gratify; and in the other, a degree of intellectual superiority, which strengthened the constitutional melancholy which she feared to increase by the rejection of a suit which Lord Frederick already proffered—

not, indeed, in words, but with looks and manners to which she could not blind herself.

The Duc and Lord Frederick were friends; they had travelled together, they had thought, they had felt, together, and till now, with only sufficient difference to enhance the pleasure they derived from one another's society.

But they were now doomed to meet with a barrier to their hitherto unreserved confidence in the passion which had awoke almost simultaneously in the breasts of both, and which now only served to embitter the pang which they experienced on the discovery of their unfortunate sympathy of feeling.

The Duc de Chatelain, like most Frenchmen, was blest with that natural gaieté de cour, which gave Margaret hope that his attachment might not prove so detrimental to his peace as she might have feared with another, and imperceptibly she was led on by those thousand nameless daily occurrences, which increase intimacy, to be more in his society than in her sober moments she desired. She sang—she played with him—she wrote charades, and bouts rinés with him; she lent him books, and he furnished her with every work of interest in ancient French literature, for she well knew the modern. He accompanied her when she rode with her father to gardens and villas, until at last she found that she had unwittingly nurtured a growing passion, and then diffidence, reserve, gentle reproaches followed on his side; excuses, assurances on hers. Yet, and still, she was vexed to know herself beloved; yet more so to think she had cause to blame herself for such being the fact. To Lord Frederick she had always shewn herself in the undisguised light in which she wished him ever to behold her, and, without ever having spoken a word on the subject of love, she felt conscious that he was aware of her heart being engaged with another.

And so it was; and while he watched, with daily increasing admiration, which served but to fan the flame which consumed him, the gentle dignity with which, without harshness, she averted the possibility of any man's subjecting himself to a decided rejection of his hopes; whilst, without coquetry, her charms held them captive beneath her sway; he thought that the object of that love, which he so earnestly coveted, was bestowed on his friend, and while that thought was unwillingly severing the bands which had hitherto united them, he felt it but generous to allow to the open-hearted De Chatelain that he was indeed the happy object of her affection.

With Margaret's former history Lord Frederick was unacquainted. He had but lately returned from the continent, and it was only since Lady de Tracey's marriage that he had met her at the Countess Olinska's. It was not, therefore, surprising that, witnessing daily, as he did, the intimacy which subsisted between her and his very handsome young friend; and hearing from others that the Countess Olinska was most anxious to make up a marriage between her and the Duc de Chatelain; his own diffidence should have united to these apparent facts to confirm him in the belief which brought conviction but not relief to his mind.

"I do not think the Countess is dressed yet," said Lord Frederick, who sat alone in her drawing-room, on the morning when Margaret repaired to her house, to renew her father's invitation, and apprise her of their intended departure for Scotland.

"Indeed! I almost fear she cannot be very well; I came here thus early, by appointment, and she is not wont to disappoint any whom she sends for on business." Margaret felt her usual timidity rather increase, as she found herself alone with a man, whose sentiments she now guessed at, and the language of whose eyes spoke too intelligibly the secret which he durst not betray in words.

She begged Lord Frederick would ring the bell to detain her carriage, and inquire whether the Countess would see her for a moment in her room. "I promise," said she smiling, "I will not detain you five minutes." Lord Frederick smiled. "Did any other lady assure me that five minutes would be the limit of a confidential conversation, my gallantry would scarcely prevent my doubting their promise; but Miss Falkland is not one I should fear to break a promise, even though it were tacitly given." The smile concluded with a sigh, and as Margaret looked up to reply, she saw the paleness of Lord Frederick's expressive countenance, and the tenderness which lingered in his eye.

She had begun—"You *fear* so," when the servant entered to say that the Countesse would be with her immediately. "I should have thought," continued she blushing, "that you would have at least have *pretended* to be glad that any young lady could be punctual, even to so trivial a promise." "Yes," rejoined Lord Frederick with emotion; "but I fear it is more than my philosophy is equal to to rejoice at that to which I adverted, however much it may increase my admiration,—my—" "Excuse me," said Margaret, confusedly; trying to laugh; "but I could scarcely guess that your powers of concentration were so limited that they could not be restrained within the space of five minutes—I think that was the time, was it not?"

"It seems indeed but a very short time," said Lord Frederick, "that concentrates all my thoughts—my feelings—my very being—I feel as if I had lived but two brief months. Those I must not remember—the rest I care not to forget—and yet it must be so. The man who claims the happiness I dare not hope for is my friend. Tell me, Miss Falkland, will you despise me if I venture to ask it; tell me, is it not so?"

As Lord Frederick spoke, he advanced towards her; but, ere she could reply, the door opened, and Countess Olinska entered. Her face beamed with benevo-

lance, but there was a degree of hurried earnestness in her manner, unlike herself, which had surprised Margaret, if Lord Frederick's words and manner had not thrown her into a state of confused abstraction, which made her glad that the Countess spoke first.

"My dear Margaret," said she extending the one hand to her and the other to Lord Frederick, with that grace which kindness imparts; "I cannot afford, even to you, one moment of my precious time—I am engaged to Lord Frederick," added she smiling. "How very wrong—quite incorrect, is it not? But my dear Conte has set his heart upon it—so it must be so. Tell me, my dear, in one word, what you have to say?"

"Only to let you know that we leave town in a few days." Lord Frederick looked as if he must have fallen to the ground; "and to implore you not to forget us among your numerous friends. My father's old friend Mr. Montgomery goes with us, so that we are to be regulated according to his will, and that you know is rather uncertain, but I may tell him you have promised and will fulfil; may I not, dear Countess?" "Oh yes! certainly we shall join you, I hope very soon; but come again to morrow and we will talk it over—adieu."

Lord Frederick handed Margaret to her carriage. He shook convulsively as he whispered in a low voice. "Tell me, I implore you, is De Chatelain as happy as I suppose him? Have I one shadow to save me from despair?" Margaret had only time to utter "No."—A crowd of servants and of the Contesse's pensioners were in the hall—the door was closed, and she was driving home ere she recollected the full import of that one word. She felt how truly she could decide as to both questions; but she could have wished to have framed that to the latter, in more gentle and kinder phrase. Alas! thought she, it is perhaps as well for him; and he must have seen how ill chosen

both time and place were for such an explanation. But she was not consoled, and when her father joined her in the evening, he found her depressed in spirits, and anxiously enquired whether she were really well enough to venture so soon to undertake a journey.

"Oh yes!" said she, eagerly, "dearest papa, by all means, I am more than ever anxious to be once more in the quiet of dear Walrond."

"Well," said General Falkland, "and so am I, love, for I hope it will do you good: but what say you to a voyage by-sea? does not the thought sicken you? Nothing, you know, dear, of the interest of snowy bird like sails—and the exciting seaman's cry and contrary winds—and delay and anxiety to keep you alive; these days of improvements have banished such ideas, even from such old heads as Montgomery's and my own; but he has set his heart on going by steam. He says that is the only way in which he could carry his canvass and his portfolio and his numberless appertenances conveniently; and so I promised him that, could I persuade you to agree, we should also go by that smoking conveyance, for I was quite sure, that if we went without him, he would never be moved out of his den."

"Oh, certainly," said Margaret, smiling, "you were quite right, as you always are. How amusing it will be. I quite enjoy the thoughts of it. And what is the day?"

"Wednesday next, I think; but we shall soon hear exactly. What a dear good girl you are; always willing to turn annoyance into pleasure. Alas! poor Evelyn." General Falkland sighed.

"Why is he poor?" said Margaret.

"Because," replied her dear father, "you would have made him so happy, and I fear he never will be so now. I heard from him to-day. He is going to marry Miss Somerville, but I can see by the tone of

his letter that it is a sacrifice to a mistaken notion of piety. But you could not help it, my poor girl—only I am sorry for the cause.”

Margaret pressed her father's hand, and was glad when an excuse, for retiring to dress for dinner, left her once more to her solitary musing.

## CHAPTER II.

*"Le monde est plein de fous, et qui n' en veut pas voir  
Doit demeurer tout seul, et casser son miroir."*

VOLTAIRE.

"WHAT a world this great city is," said Margaret, as she looked from the carriage which was conveying her father, Mr. Montgomery, the Duc de Chatelain, and herself, through the crowded streets of the city, to Blackwall, between eleven and twelve o'clock at night. The party had been long silent, each occupied with their own reflections, for who does not reflect when commencing a journey?

Such a flood of remembrances rush in upon the mind, while the body is moved on by other means than self-exertion. So many regrets; perhaps so many anticipations. Or, in the absence of these, who has not felt something of the influence which the monotonous sound of a carriage wheels has on setting the mind to work on subjects far different from those connected either with present objects, or the cause of our present movements. Those who, under such circumstances, can sleep, must be completely happy or completely worn out by bodily fatigue, or mental suffering. General Falkland slept; at least, Margaret thought so, for his eyes were closed, and he spoke not a word; Mr. Montgomery was wholly absorbed in counting, mentally, over the numerous bales and packages which contained his valuables, and only, from time to time, muttered something like a groan or a grunt, to which he added, "stupid blockheads—always too soon or too late."

The words recalled to Margaret's mind her late conversation with Lord Frederick, whom she had not since met. She looked towards De Chatelain. The



light of the lamps, as they glanced successively on his countenance, or of the huge torches which glared over the meat and vegetable stalls, which, in this hitherto unknown quarter of the town, surprised her at every step; reminded her of the expediency of hazarding some common-place observation to break the silence, and to remove something of that pensiveness which she observed, and which she grieved to think was occasioned by his parting with her.

He had become a great favorite with General Falkland, and had easily obtained permission to accompany them to the place of embarkation. Margaret regretted this additional proof of his decided preference for her, especially as he relinquished, for that purpose, a musical party which the Countess Olinska gave that night.

"Were you ever here before?" said she to him. "I really had not any idea what a wonderful town London is. The thought might be useful, were I a good moralist, in shewing me how equally narrow my ideas may be on every other subject; but, you know, young ladies are bound to be ignorant, it makes them so interesting."

"If such be the case," rejoined De Chatelain, "I have yet to learn it. But you would make a poor believer to such a theory; however, I have the advantage over you in this instance, for there is scarcely a street in this vast city through which I have not passed. Foreigners, you know, see more than natives, at least; than English natives. I never knew a Roman who has not worshipped in St. Peter's, or a Frenchman who had not seen Père la Chaise; but I have actually met with many of your countrymen who have never entered St. Paul's."

"Well," said Margaret, "I cannot account for it; but there is certainly an unaccountable indifference in many of us for any sight-seeing, but foreign panoramas, Siamese twins, living skeletons, or pantomimes.

But see what a crowd we have got into: we shall never reach our destination in time to sail to-night."

"Oh! charming, charming," said De Chatelain, clapping his hands, "and then we shall have you another week."

The General awoke. "Not quite so charming I fear, my dear Duc," said he, as he felt something strike the back part of the carriage; and looking out of the window, found that they were hemmed in by a huge waggon in front, a crowd of the lowest description arresting its progress; and a hackney coach, with an angry driver, driving the pole of his vehicle into their own.

"Let me out," said De Chatelain to the servant, and I will see about it." So saying he jumped from the carriage. The cause of the crowd was now explained. A gentleman's cabriolet was lying prostrate on the street. The horse had become entangled, and the crowd were lavishing there abuse on the gentleman's servant, who was abusing the driver of the waggon in return, as the cause of the accident. A narrow lane, a few paces behind, fortunately enabled the hackney coach to back into it. De Chatelain bribed him into a retreat, and re-entered the carriage, which soon effected an issue from the same difficulty.

"It is very strange," said De Chatelain, as they drove on; "that was certainly Frederick's cab, and servant; but he escaped from the fray as soon as it happened—very unlike him, I must say."

Margaret was glad that the streets were so narrow, and the lights so few; for she guessed why he might be there on that night, but she said nothing.

The conversation became general; and, to his great joy, De Chatelain heard himself again pressed to visit Walrond Castle. At length the carriage stopped at the ingress of a dark lane, which opened to a widely extending quay, which led to the brink of the river. There were some paces to walk. Margaret took De

Chatelain's proffered arm, and looked at the scene before her. The damp mist from the river impeded the distant prospect; but from the numerous lights in the boats which moved along the water, and showed the silvery glance of the moving oars, she descried the ponderous size of the vessel into which she was shortly to enter; while here and there were seen the reflected forms of boatmen and passengers, moving across the flickering beams like spectral visions.

She stopped for a moment to observe the picturesque effect, which shade so partially illumined occasioned, when she felt her hand gently pressed by a figure which stood beside her, although hitherto unobserved. It was mantled in a large dark cloak, and she started, deeming it an intrusion which she dreaded, but the low and musical tones of Lord Frederick Ashton's voice recalled her to a painful remembrance of the past, and an anxious desire that De Chatelain should not observe him, which she contrived by advancing a few paces, and then as suddenly again pausing, as if to continue her former contemplations.

"If you have not indeed wilfully deceived me," said Lord Frederick, in a low whisper, "which your present society, under present circumstances, makes me, in spite of myself, apprehend, read this, with the indulgence which the ardour and sincerity of my attachment claim.—Farewell."

A letter was thrust into her hand; and when she turned, as if to re-assure herself that what she had seen and felt were not a dream, she could perceive nothing but the distant light of the place where she had left the carriage, round which a moving mass of attendants were seen disposing of the luggage to various porters, and uttering short and hasty exclamations on the nature of their business.

"You are very absent to-night," said De Chatelain, gently pressing the trembling hand upon his arm. "I saw your thoughts were not so completely engrossed

with that northern land which has the happiness to be your home—one thought for those you leave behind, in charity—I beg of you, charming Miss Falkland.”

Margaret smiled bitterly. “You are, perhaps, mistaken, Duc,” she said, “and yet I would not deceive you. My thoughts are with those who have left me, and whom I may never meet again; and yet to those who are kind enough to regret my bidding them adieu, I leave my kindest wishes—my affectionate thanks. These I trust they will receive—it is all I have to offer, and now farewell. I hear my father, and Mr. Montgomery’s voice; and see, here is the boat quite in readiness—I do not wish you to come further: it is needless trouble.

In vain De Chatelain begged for leave to accompany her to the ship; and, with tears fast rolling over his manly face, he watched the splash of the oars, till they ceased beneath the shadow of the vessel, and then mournfully retraced his steps homewards.

When Margaret entered the steam vessel, which as a personal conveyance she beheld for the first time, the novelty of the scene served for a while to dissipate and direct her thoughts. Agitated, as she had been, by the consciousness of giving unwilling pain to two persons whom she admired and liked; and yet more by the thought of being still farther parted from that one to whom her heart’s affections clung with unabated tenderness. The buoyancy of youthful spirits revived as she looked round on a scene without much of charm indeed, either to sense or feeling, but invested with something of comical interest which amused her, and which, aided by the strange observations of Mr. Montgomery, and by the liveliness of her parent, whose spirits rose in the prospect of returning to his home, raised in her a desire to *seem* at least as happy, or as cheerful, as they did.

“Damme,” said a young, a very young officer, with a laced coat and tasselled cap, as he paced the deck,

with a cigar in his cheek, and a silver snuff-box in his hand, "what a confounded smell! How lucky that my sister, Lady Hopkins, did not accompany me as she intended."

"Steward," cried a faint voice from the hatchway, "bring Miss Bridges, No. 7, a glass of brandy, and a bottle of ginger beer. The smell of the ship has made her sick already," shouted the stewardess. "Poor creature—make haste, you lazy lubber!"

"What made you leave them behind?" said the loud voice of a very fat elderly gentleman to a woman who held a child in one arm, and two in each hand, "I paid two shillings for them, and every one knows that fat pork is the antidote for sea-sickness."

"Sure, master, and the children were squalling, and master just upset all the peppermint drops and the cheese-cakes, and the shay was at the door, so it can't be helped."

The newly-arrived party moved on. Mr. Montgomery hastened to inspect the stowage of his paint-boxes and canvases; and Margaret proceeded to the cabin she was to inhabit, hoping, that, in the quiet of that place, she might find leisure to peruse the strangely entrusted letter which she held in her hand; but the adjoining apartment, inhabited by numerous figures en masse, en toilette, to which her cabin opened, sent her back in alarm; and it was not till she and her father had formed several acquaintances among the many groups that paced the deck, or arrested their steps to gaze by the uncertain light on the lovely girl before them, and till most of these retired to their places of repose, that Margaret again ventured to the lower regions, in which there was certainly little to attract, though much to amuse.

It was with pain that she read the declaration of Lord Frederick Asthon's attachment to her. The reasons he had to induce him so long to maintain silence, owing to the regard he entertained for his friend whom

he had thought, until the day of their conversation, to be the favored object of her choice;—his uncertainty as to her reply, and the hope, which he could not wholly dismiss, which bade him thus entrust the secret of his happiness, or his despair, to her, who should be the arbitress of his fate. He implored, yet dreaded, an answer; but could not see her thus depart, without seizing his last opportunity of obtaining one sight of her whose absence was death to his hopes.

In a moment of vexation Margaret almost wavered. Lord Frederick stood fresh before her memory. Was not he handsome, elegant, accomplished, far more—possessed of every valuable quality which could endear and hallow the nuptial tie? But was he loved?—No answering voice could belie the tenderness of years for another, and, with all the kindness, which friendship could suggest and pity lend to her answer, she perused the sad reply, and, ere she sailed for Scotland, had sent the messenger of disappointment, and unavailing regret, to the amiable being whom she saw not again till——But who can anticipate? Who dare do so in this world of changes? Well is it for those whose feelings are tuned to a keen sensibility of pain or pleasure, that the daily occurrences of life come in with their influence, to deaden the power of both, and to shew us that the path we tread is not enchanted ground; though, to those who faithfully fulfil their allotted part, occasional gales, of a purer air, wafted from a brighter clime, bid us hasten there with a lighter step, and a more cheerful heart.

Such of the refined and delicate fair ones who have never trodden but the mossy surface of an ornamental carpet, or inhaled ought but the perfumes of scented drawing-rooms, would recoil at the offence offered to their senses by the sights and sounds which greet the steamboat travellers at every moment, but to Margaret, who had accustomed herself, from early youth, to mingle among those of every rank, who had not shunn-

the disagreeable air of a dirty cottage, or the noisy vulgar voice; or who had seen the still more vulgar of those of more pretensions, of such as Sir Thomas M'Call; there was a conversion of mind in observing the varieties of conduct, which a public conveyance, where, as in the case of the "take their ease," like Falstaff, because they were not paid for the privilege, and where, in consequence, there is no restraint imposed save such as common order and decency prescribe. There is little chance, in this country at least, of such being violent at any time.

The American may, as Mrs. Trollope describes, give way to his inclination for ease, in a demonstrative manner, such as few English even of the lowest grade of education will wish for; but in the minds of our countrymen there is an honest pride of evincing ourselves to be such as we really wish to be; decent and respectable, however vulgar; that the most dignified of womankind will seldom have her eyes or ears offended by any thing but an oath, in those scenes from which the squeamishly affected would retire in disgust merely because the manners of those around suit not exactly the limited circle in which they have been accustomed to move.

Margaret was, to be sure, a little more constrained in her manner, when she sat at the hours of dinner, opposite the pert looking young man who had regaled her nose all morning with the fumes of his cigar, and now sat, alternately twirling his moustaches with self satisfaction, or fixing a pair of unmeaning grey eyes on her countenance; but her gravity relapsed into a smile as she met the good-natured glance of a jolly fat woman, with dark eyes, and a profusion of black ringlets, which fell over, but could not shade a very red face, on which two purple stains which had apparently been there from childhood, extended from one side of the forehead to the mouth, on one side; and

from her nose to her neck on the other. The repeated draughts of porter and port wine, with which she regaled herself, added not a little to the roseate hue of her complexion, and heightened the brilliancy of eyes which, in any other head, must have been pronounced handsome.

The grave, pale face of Mr. Montgomery, who sat beside her, formed a striking contrast to the jollity of her appearance, and his abrupt laconic answers served not as interruptions; but as marks of any thing but marks of approbation (if such could be found in the punctuating grammar) with which her long and loud periods concluded. "Pray, Sir, have you ever been in India?" said she to her taciturn companion; but, not meeting with a reply, she continued:—"I presume, Sir, you have not—bless me! what a pity; you might have been a Nabob by this time, for I should think you are at least as old as my poor husband was when he died." Here she fetched a sigh, suppressed by a bumper of port-wine:—"and in faith, my dear Sir, he did not die a beggar; no one can say that at least. He left me well provided for, and my daughter too. I dare say you never saw my daughter, though she was the toast of Calcutta for a twelvemonth, and would have been so for twice the time, but she was whipped up before you could say——by a smart young officer—a fine youth! a very fine youth indeed, and one worthy of such a sweet creature as she is, but I have her picture in my pocket." "I dare say that's worth seeing," said Mr. Montgomery, with a grunt which Margaret understood, but which Mrs. Mitford, the self-satisfied speaker, conceived to be the expression of his sincere anxiety. "Oh yes, Sir! It is indeed, and it aint what I would shew to every body: but you are a bit of a favorite already; and Mr. Jones, there, told me you knew something of the art." "What can he know about it?" said Mr. Montgomery, glancing with an eye of contempt at a little man in black satin



breeches, drab coat and yellow waistcoat; and who returned it with a condescending bow, which seemed to say:—"More than you think for, Sir."

"Oh he knows all about it, my dear Sir, he painted the largest historical picture, on the west side of the second room at Somerset house; and though it was the darkest part of the chamber (the Directors, he says, are so partial) you could see the crimson tail of the dragon the minute you entered and the frightened lady's yellow dress—I forget her name, looked as bright as my watch; you might have seen it a mile off without spectacles. But I beg your pardon, Sir, I can't get my hand in my pocket, except you put yourself aside for a minute—there, that will do," said she, thrusting her hand into a huge pocket, and extracting therefrom two oranges, some ginger cakes, a bunch of keys, a bottle of oil, and last, not least, in a brilliant red case, the picture of her beloved daughter. "There," she said, as she unclapsed it proudly, and placed the glaring daub before the eyes of Mr. Montgomery; "there she is, as like as paint and ivory can make her."

"I'm sure it's like," said he, closing it as suddenly and returning it to the admiring parent, for he had seen enough of the pink satin gown, and orange shawl, which ornamented the stiff black lines which portrayed the features of a masculine looking woman, whose beauty was certainly of the ideal kind, though only to one fancy.

"You will surely wish to see it also," said Mrs. Mitford, handing it over to Miss Falkland, "but here is something which I think you will not despise, when I tell you my daughter owes much of the admiration she had met with to its use. Sir, pray take a cake," continued she, offering one considerably smashed by the weight of her person, to Mr. Montgomery. "It is," she continued, holding up a greasy-looking bottle in the other hand, "It is perfumed castor oil—the most invaluable recipe for the hair. You have pretty hair,

Miss, but this will make it perfect, and, if you will not despise the offering of a stranger, I will make you a present of this. It is perfumed with the best bergamotte, and cannot fail in producing that much-envied lustre which you see shines on my curls."

Margaret bowed, and politely endeavored to decline the offering. Mr. Montgomery arose hastily, and went on deck; the sight of the picture and the oil having fairly overcome his clumsy efforts at civility.

"Talking of drawing," said the shrill voice of a little red-haired woman, somewhat farther down the table, "I am very anxious to give lessons, in a private manner, to those who admire that art, this season in Edinburgh, and shall be happy to attend those in the country who will be willing to have me as an inmate in their houses for a short time. Pray, Madam," said she, addressing herself to Margaret, "may I request, when you have leisure, you will look over this portfolio? I brought it for the inspection of the company."

The lady to whom the flock of children belonged, whose screams had not aided the sleep of the passengers, and who was the wife of the fat gentleman who sat in silence, but not in idleness over a large Stilton cheese, now whispered to her companion:—"why could not she apply to people of more consequence than that young Miss?"

"You are a fool, Betsy," rejoined a sharp-looking youth, dressed in the extreme of the fashion, and who had appeared rather uncomfortable all dinner time, because he was placed by the side of his less genteel sister, so that he seemed to belong to her. "You are a d——d fool, and I do n't care though Tom should hear me say so. Do n't you know she is General Falkland's daughter, and that the brown carriage and two servants are theirs? and don't you know the old gentleman is her uncle, and you should n't have let Tom be so sick over him to-day, as you said you

did on purpose, because he groaned when Susan screamed!"

"Well, brother, but how could I know that?" said his mortified sister, cramming a large piece of cheese into the said Susan's mouth at the same time.

During this fraternal expostulation, the portfolio of the ambitious drawing-mistress was passing round the table, and Margaret had come to the determination that her lessons had best be confined to the privacy of Mrs. Blackwood's nursery, although she regretted that Mr. Montgomery had deprived himself of the amusement of inspecting it.

On one of the numerous embossed cards was portrayed, in lines of vermillion, a gigantic Cupid, with appropriate bow and arrow. Above this, and pasted all round the arabesque embossment, was a thin sheet of paper, on which was a full-blown rose, the leaves of which were each carefully cut out, except on one side; its heart was made with yellow silk, intended to be carefully lifted, when, through the purple leaves of the intended flower, the god of Love was to be discovered.

Some of Mrs. Simkin's productions coincided better with Burke's definition of the sublime, being less intelligible to ordinary capacities, and Margaret felt relieved that her sincerity was not to be called upon to bely itself by many encomiums on these vivid representations of Mrs. Simkin's bright fancy, because those of Mrs. Blackwood were so loud and energetic, the first ecstasy of her approving inspection of them; she saw already the whole host of little Blackwoods emulating the imitation of these wonders, and had promised to the happy and smiling mistress many scholars among her friends and acquaintances in Edinburgh.

Mrs. Blackwood's brother now began to lessen his admiration for Margaret's taste in the fine arts, and to think he might have been mistaken as to the possessor of the smart brown carriage, when he saw the General

actually handing his snuff-box to a shabbily-dressed lad, who sat beside him, and hitherto had not ventured to utter a word, whether from diffidence as to his personal merits, or depression of spirits, no one could tell, but the sound of his voice had not been heard, till Mrs. Mitford's loud appeal to him across the table turned the eyes and attention of all around upon him, and summoned the blush of confusion to a countenance pale with wasting thought. "I dare say," she said, in a manner which meant to be encouraging; because she felt she intended kindly, "I dare say she is not so bad as they told you. Come, my lad, cheer up, and give us a song; do n't be ashamed of your profession, my fine fellow. It is honorable when the motive is so good. Sing us one of your national melodies. I am sure the General will like it."

The countenance of the poor young man was suffused with a momentary flush; but again it subsided to its natural pallid hue, and he looked imploringly to General Falkland. The latter whispered to him, "Pray do not sing, if it is unpleasant to you; though I should be glad to hear my native strains, they are always replete with the genuine enchantment of music to my ears, when sung feelingly."

"Oh, sir, if you ask it, certainly," said the youth; and then, without lifting his eyes, he began, in a clear and silvery tone, to sing that affecting melody to which the tender words of Burns have added so sweet an interest:—

"Wilt thou be my dearie, &c.  
When sorrow wrings thy gentle heart,  
Wilt thou let me cheer thee?" &c.

Mr. Montgomery appeared at the cabin door as he began; and, gently sliding behind the figures which stood there, talking of the political news of the days, in contempt of the music, he contrived to place himself within hearing of the singer; and soon the interest which he felt in it was observed by Margaret, though he hastily brushed a tear away, ere he could think himself suspected of so much weakness.

How unfortunate it is that in this world except we are so wrapped in the selfish determination of enjoying our own feelings, apart from the satisfaction of others, there are so few occasions in which we are at liberty to do so uninterruptedly. The moment of refined light, in the experience of happy days, for ever gone, recalled by the voice of music, or by the poetic line, is perhaps succeeded by the harsh tones of vulgar intrusion, or by the necessary summons to attend some trivial duty.

The transient hour of bliss, we spend with one beloved, is followed by the painful intercourse with those who have no feeling in common with ourselves; and even the luxury of silent thought must often be suspended by the claim which courtesy urges for exchanging it for words of unmeaning import, when compared with that which has lately engaged us.

To General Falkland's mind the days of his youth and his happiness were recalled by the simple strain which he had just heard repeated so feelingly by a youth, whose appearance and manners interested him much.

Margaret's fond heart replied to the tender expostulation with all the warm devotedness she felt for one ever present to her mind; and poor Mr. Montgomery thought of the last time he had heard that song from lips now silent; but which he thought were the only ones which could warble his native ballads to his heart's content. But all this mingled sensation of enjoyment with remembered woes was soon dispelled by the loud contrivances which followed from Mr. Jones and Mrs. Blackwood, that Mrs. Mitford would also favor them with a song; and still more so when, with ready compliance, she proceeded to obey their requests. At this indeed, the very strange sounds which issued from her throat, resembling the reiterated application of hands to a pair of obstinate bellows, induced some of the passengers to look out of the port-holes, in expectation of a storm, and produced so powerful an

effect on poor Margaret's nerves that, notwithstanding her conviction of the polite necessity of constraint, she could not refrain from laughter.

Who has not experienced the difficulty of suppressing risible inclinations, when suddenly called forth, after a far different sensation?

Fortunately for her, however, Mrs. Mitford's eyes were so highly strained beyond the cabin roof, with the exertions she made to give utterance to the embryo note that she could not watch the effect on her hearers, until a loud shrill shake gave notice of what was to follow; and, with many a lingering cadence and dying fall, she sang "*Dulce domum*," till most of those who heard her sighed for the conclusion, which at length arrived, to Margaret's infinite satisfaction. Mrs. Mitford was delighted—the purple stains on her cheek assumed a deeper hue; and, with a large glass of port wine in hand, she bowed her thanks to the several notes of approbation which the least sincere, or the least knowing in music, bestowed upon her performance; and then requested the young dandy would reward her by "the tinkling of his light guitar." The instrument was produced; but after much tuning, the dandy found it impossible to remember one which satisfied him, as he assured the company he was too fastidious; and, with some suspicions of their minds as to his capabilities, they separated for conversation till evening.

With such scenes as these, General Falkland and his daughter were amused, and even Mr. Montgomery declared that he had been less annoyed than he could have expected among such a host of blockheads.

General Falkland had become interested in the fate of young Felix Jermyn. He was born in good circumstances, but by the death of his father, who was a lawyer, his mother had been left in great distress. He had been intended for the church, but his finances would not permit his prosecuting the necessary stu-

dies, and having a talent for music, he had endeavored to make use of it by singing at private parties. He was now on his way to see his mother, whom he feared to be in a dangerous state of health, and the tender interest which he felt for his only friend and parent procured for him another in the sympathising breast of General Falkland.

Where is the scene, or the occasion in which genuine benevolence will not find a field open for its exertion? Where is the being, actuated by that noblest delight of doing good, who will not humbly rejoice in the opportunity?

Oftentimes indeed, ingratitude will repay the philanthropist's kindest acts of charity; but he finds in this but a deeper conviction of the bounty of a divine Benefactor; and learns humility; and should he be requited with thankfulness, how will he praise the guide of Providence which adds a sweetness to his choicest gifts, by permitting him to distribute them aright!

The silent expression of young Jermyn, as he looked respectfully far more than he could utter of gratitude on leaving the ship, amply repaid General Falkland for his more than intended liberality, and he lived to rejoice that he had lightened the lot of one so friendless and so deserving,

Who that has ever beheld the wide and cheering prospect which opens on the entrance of the Frith of Forth, on a fine sunny morning, but has felt, if a native of the soil to which he is hastening, a pride and exultation of heart, as he calls these shores his own, and gazed with many a remembrance on those historical incidents which give an interest to its every step on the sea girt beauties? And what stranger can refrain from admiring the majestic eminence on which that capital is situated which overlooks the land of honest worth, to which its natives are proud to belong?

Margaret had never entered Scotland but by the gradual steps to which a journey by land conveys the traveller, as it were interceptibly from her southern sister; and she could scarcely account for the thrill of pride and joy which she experienced as she looked upon her native hills, partially discovered by the bright rays of a rising sun, while the rest was still enveloped in the mists of morning, and were only disclosed as the vessel neared the wild and romantic rock of the Bass, round which its thousand birds were wheeling with their silver wings—then resting in snowy masses on its sides, till it almost seemed as if winter had already usurped his icy sway over the rude and rugged eminences. But the calm blue sea beneath, in which the warm beams of an autumnal sun reflected an unusual brilliancy, and the light breeze which refreshed, but did not render the atmosphere unpleasantly cold, harmonised with the tints of the yellow fields, which waved on the more distant coast, and gave promise of an abundant harvest.

The broad dialect of the fishermen and boatmen, which greeted her ears on landing gave her a pleasure, which was warmly participated by her old friend Mr. Montgomery, who seemed to renew his youth as he repeatedly exclaimed, "That does a man's heart good! There's auld Reekie as bonny as she ever was. Sure enough its thirty years since I set foot on my own native earth, and it makes it bound again now I do so. Talk of your southern fruits and flowers, but what can equal these," said he, gazing with delight on the richly laden boughs which waved on the sunny banks of the hills leading to the town; and which, whether dressed in their light green foliage, weighed more pensively by the autumnal fruitage, form as it were a rich and beautiful pedestal to the towering battlements of the castle, or the diversified hues of the ancient dwellings round its base.



The travellers having taken lodgings for a few days in one of the hotels in the New Town, they did not leave it till Mr. Montgomery had re-visited the scenes to which early associations had so much attached him, and till General Falkland, having made farther inquiries concerning his young protégé, and ascertained his necessities, had fulfilled his generous designs for the furtherance of his success in that profession for which he had been intended; and then, with hearts filled with those happy anticipations which attend the virtuous and beloved, he and his daughter and friend proceeded on their way home.

### CHAPTER III.

"Home ! home ! sweet, sweet home  
There's no place like home."

Yes ! it is true ; in spite of all that grinding organs and cracked voices can do to dispel the enchantment which that sweet song conveys to hearts who feel that poetry and song are not always woven by the spider loom of fiction, and who know that the chief delight of memory is derived from the experience of truth.

There is no place like home even to the wayward wandering child, who loves to roam in search of forbidden pleasures or fancied delight. There is the warm nook by the nursery fire-side, where he has sat on a mother's knees, and lisped his brief prayer, seconded by the fond kiss, and the tender "God bless you." And there is the little cup-board, replenished with the sweet cake, or choice fruit, to be given as the reward of a return in time from the spreading green, with its balls and hoops, and mimic cannons ; or from the variegated garden, with its tool-house and its pond, where he has sailed the fairy ship, decked with the flag those dear hands made for infant enjoyment.

It is dear to the heart of youth, whose bounding step no longer leisurely answers to the bell which summons him to the distant, and now forgotten, school ; but the silent, yet expressive gestures of outstretched arms of a dear maternal form, or the warm grasp of a father's hand, or the noisy glee of a little brother and sister's welcome.

It is dear to the youthful fair one, who has, perhaps, enjoyed the whisper of praise which her loveliness has called forth in the crowded town, or who has laughed and cried alternately at the scenic represen-

many of thoughts and passions, and feelings, for which she may have an instinctive, but not an experimental sympathy. But she returns to the freshness of her home, with every renewed association of enjoyment to which her heart has responded—and it is there she knows she is loved—and it is there she is most worthy of being so; for every gentle sympathy of her nature is called forth beneath the roof of her childhood, and the watchful guardianship of her youth; and it is there she may attend to the wants and weaknesses of these dear ones, and to the necessities of her poor neighbors, and it is there she may silently teach her younger sisters and brothers that forbearance which, in their little plays, her superior age and example may gently enforce. And is it not dear to the aged alike in prosperous, or adverse circumstances? Is not this the sphere of their mild, but extensive, influence? Is it not here that, loved and honored, and respected, by children, relatives and dependants, they are daily and hourly reminded of their mercies and of their duties; and feel their gratitude increase in proportion to their usefulness? Here would the affectionate patient wish to end his days on earth, and here would he daily find a sweet foretaste of his heavenly home for which he is preparing.

As the travelling party proceeded through the well-known village, adjoining the Castle gates, they were hailed on every side by sights and sounds of rejoicing. The matron folded her infant to her arms, and as she stood at the cottage door, in obedience to the loud summons of her elder progeny, who ran forward, waving their hands with childish glee, and screaming with all the unrestrained ecstasy of untaught

A workman paused from his rustic labor to doff his cap, and gaze on the receding vehicle till its wheels were seen entering the porter's lodge, where the door was opened quickly for its welcome approach.

Even nature herself seemed to smile more serenely than was her wont, to bid the loved and revered patron of the rural scene welcome to his home.

The aged trees bent their long and leafy branches over the green sward, in sweet and still repose. The young plantations, which extended over the distant hills, were tinged with the golden light of a setting sun, and the fragrance of the flowers, which bloomed around the castle walls, sent up their sweetness through the air, with a grateful freshness, which seemed, as unseen friends, to rejoice in the return of those who had planted and loved them best.

But not in silence did they meet the reverend form of Mr. Mac Farlane, their old and faithful friend. With a countenance beaming with benevolent joy, he grasped the hands of the General and his beloved Margaret, while something like a tear glistened in his mild eye, as he said "God bless you; only one of my lovely children now—but all is well—and she will also return soon, I trust."

Then came the happy necessity for preparing apartments, for her kind old friend, Mr. Montgomery, who, enchanted with the beauty of the scene, and the freshness of the country, was already wandering through the gardens, indulging in the luxury of treading the green sward, and musing on the past, with more softness in his heart than he was wont to feel in his pent-up chamber in town.

When Margaret entered the apartment where she used to spend so many happy hours with her beloved sister, a thousand associations, now mingled with regret, rushed into her mind, and, fatigued in body as she felt by her late journey, and excited by the mixed emotions which affected her, on her return home, she yielded to the weakness of nature, and burst into a flood of tears. A gentle knock at the door recalled her to herself, and, hastily dashing her tears, she ran to open it. Mr. Mac Far

view. Smiling, he held in his hand a letter which bore a foreign post mark, and on which she instantly recognised the hand-writing of Susan. "Oh, thank you—thank you," she said, tearing the seal, and fixing her eyes on the well-known characters.

"Will you permit me to wait one moment," said Mr. Mac Farlane, gently. "I have heard no tidings of my dear young lady since her marriage, and would fain know that she is as well—as happy as I wish her."

The word "happy" seemed to choke him—Margaret looked up. "Why these tears?" "Dear Miss Margaret, forgive a friend's anxiety, but....."

"I understand you," rejoined Margaret, "you fear as I do, but I trust you are mistaken. She speaks not of herself, in that way, at least—but—yes, yes, she is well—quite well—only a little lonely. Lord de Tracey is still at the chateau, and she cannot go much out in Paris, you know, in his absence; but she expects he will be with her soon, and then they proceed together to the chateau Montmorenci."

"Thank you," said the good Mr. Mac Farlane, but, ere he closed the door, she heard an involuntary sigh escape his lips, and it was echoed from the chambers of her heart—for in this letter, which she held with a trembling hand, and which she was anxious, with more than sisterly affection to conclude, she read a name, which seemed to obliterate, by its magic, every other remembrance, and to make her the selfish being which she feared to be, when she thought of one whose image effaced all others from her mental vision.

Long and often did she pause over, and read—and read again the following words: "I know not whether you will be glad to hear that Mr. Hamilton is in Paris—I have seen him twice, but he either did not see, or did not wish to recognise me; and in my husband's absence, I cannot make inquiry as to his present abode, or future plans, but should we meet on his return here, I shall let you know."

There was little in this to ponder over, but the effect which it produced on poor Margaret's spirits, served to lessen the gladness with which she turned to her wonted objects of interest in and about her home, and it was many days ere she recovered that healthful tone of placidity which enabled her to resume the duties and occupations to which she had been accustomed.

She spent many hours in shewing her old friend, Mr. Montgomery, her favorite views, and attending now to the burst of enthusiastic admiration of Highland scenery—now to the querulous tone of regret with which he lamented the joys of days gone by, and to compensate for the loss of which, she saw that he had not within him any adequate consolation.

Can there be a feeling more replete with mournfulness to the heart of youth than to see the brow of age furrowed with lines which misfortune and disappointment have placed there, while conscious that the best antidote for the world's sorrows is as yet unknown or untasted by them? and silent prayer is all that youth (who has received higher privileges) may exert in behalf of such sufferers; and the hope that such prayers may not be in vain cheers their spirits, and serves as a warning to themselves. Happy they who forget not to use so high a privilege, and who fail not to obtain so great a blessing. Once, when from a distant height Margaret pointed out to her friend the hills of Walrond which encircled the mansion, for which they both entertained so deep an interest; although the remembrance of what he had for ever lost was far more distant than the doubt which still kept her hopes and fears in fearful strife; his emotion far exceeded what she could have imagined to exist in the breast of one so aged; and, leaning his head on her shoulder, he sobbed aloud.

"Oh! take me away, my dear young lady: I cannot bear it. Take me from the sight of this delicious

"— is too fair—too beautiful—too like what it  
 was when she was there."

Margaret pressed his hand, but spoke not. The  
 tears upon an aged face is too affecting to be  
 moved by words. Their source is too sacred to in-  
 volve that consolation which we can only hope, in si-  
 lence, a better Hand than human aid can give may im-  
 part.

Margaret felt also the necessity of suppressing her  
 own feelings, when she saw the baneful effect of nur-  
 turing vain regrets, and humbly resolved with patience  
 to await, and to meet whatever the will of divine Pro-  
 vidence should assign to her, without a murmur.

With cheerful alacrity she plucked the sweetest  
 flowers she could gather, and placed them in his  
 hands; then, with a sweet smile, she repeated, half  
 playfully, and half tearfully, for she felt herself affect-  
 ed, the following favorite lines of Wordsworth.—

"Nature never did betray  
 The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,  
 Through all the years of this one life, to lead  
 From joy to joy; for she can so inform  
 The mind that is within us, so impress  
 With quietness and beauty, and so feed  
 With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,  
 But judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,  
 Nor greetings, where no kindness is, nor all  
 The dreary intercourse of common life  
 Shall ere prevail against us, or disturb  
 Our cheerful faith that all that we behold  
 Is full of blessings."

"And is it not so, dear Mr. Montgomery?" added  
 she, placing his hand on her arm, and leading him on  
 towards the castle.

"I am sure you could make most folks think so," re-  
 joined her old friend kindly; but when she looked in his  
 face again, the frown returned, and, in his usual harsh  
 tones, he exclaimed:—"Who is this now? Some  
 one that wants something of you, I dare say, for see  
 how quick she comes towards us. She, indeed: it

seems more like the figure of a man in petticoats than any of the gentle kind."

Margaret looked to where Mr. Montgomery pointed, and recognised in the object of his alarm the tall thin form of Mrs. Stuart, who, attired as usual in her decent suit of brown, was advancing rapidly towards her, followed by the less hasty, though equally eager, steps of her old uncle, Mr. Lazenby.

"Well, my dear, here you are at last, and glad I am to see you," said the well known voice of Mrs. Stuart, who grasped, rather than embraced, her with her iron arms, and applied a loud and hearty kiss on each side of her cheek. "I thought I should find you here—but who is that?" she enquired in a loud whisper. "A safe companion, at least." Mr. Montgomery frowned again, for his ears were at least as quick as his eyes, and the impression made on the one sense was not more favorable than that which the other had received.

The introduction was made in silence; and in a few minutes they were accosted by Mr. Lazenby, in a long strain of complimentary address, interrupted only by his attempts to regain his breath, which the quick pace of his niece had somewhat impaired. "Joy, joy, my dear lady, give me joy. My work is concluded. My *Inagonia* is gone to the press. The first proof sheets reached me to-day; and you can have no idea what a magnificent effect it will produce in the literary world. Positively electrifying. Copies are to be sent to every sovereign in Europe; and your fair sister's name at the head of the page will not disgrace it. Amazing."

"What's amazing?" said the gruff voice of Mr. Montgomery, in such a tone of querulous crossness as fairly arrested the steps and the fluency of Mr. Lazenby.

"Your servant, sir," said he, bowing.

"Oh!" repeated Mr. Montgomery, and walked on.



Margaret could not preserve her gravity; but, endeavoring to rectify the mistake with as little explanation as possible, she contrived to restore the parties to something of a better humor; and Mr. Montgomery had actually pronounced Mr. Lazenby to be, after all, a shrewd sensible man before they had together entered the house. The fact, was that his praises of Susan, and his evident deference and admiration for Margaret, had greatly tended to place him in the good graces of his new friend, and this indeed was the only bond of union between two characters so dissimilar.

Margaret was glad to find General Falkland in more than usual spirits. When she entered his sitting-room to announce the arrival of her friends, she perceived him laughing immoderately over a note which he held in his hand, and which he handed to her as he rose to receive his guests.

Margaret instantly recognized the hand-writing, and could scarcely refrain from laughter as she read the following effusion, which was penned with many dashes and flourishes on a sheet of embossed pink paper, representing the union of two hearts, supported on one side by a small Cupid, and on the other by one of larger dimensions, holding the hymeneal torch, round each of which a wreath of thornless roses were entwined.

"My dear General,

"Though, perhaps, some of your family could scarcely rejoice in an event which has sealed my happiness, and that of another amiable and accomplished individual; yet, I feel sure that your good sense will not be surprised by my finding it impossible any longer to await the change of mind, which time will no doubt, have effected on a certain uncertain individual, who shall be nameless. Miss Arabella Thompson, of Dishington-Hall, Glasgow, has conferred on me the happiness of her undivided choice; and, per-

haps, the good luck which attends us may be extended to some of your family, should they not be too proud to follow our good old Scotch fashion, and sleep upon a bit of our wedding-cake, which I forwarded to you so soon as I heard of your return home.

"Lady Mac Call will be happy to make acquaintance with you and Miss Falkland whenever you find it convenient to call upon us; when I flatter myself all may derive encouragement from the sight of one happy honey-moon.

With kind compliments to Miss and yourself, I remain,

My dear Sir,

Your's truly,

Thomas Mac Call."

"P. S. Did you ever see the pretty mottoes which it is now the fashion to put in wedding-cakes."

The huge brown paper parcel, which accompanied this elegant epistle, was unfolded, as general Falkland smilingly said he was determined his household should share in the happy prospects of his friend; and it was then that Margaret discovered the meaning of Sir Thomas's significant hint; by unfolding from the hands of a smart red and yellow figure, the following motto :—

"She that will not, when she may :  
When she will, she shall have nay."

Mrs. Stuart took the opportunity of explaining the cause of Sir Thomas's civilities to Mr. Montgomery, who failed not to give out his sonorous expressions of contempt, in conjunction with the repeated exclamations of 'amazing!' which proceeded from the lips of Mr. Lazenby.

"What an insolent fellow!" said she to General Falkland, "surely, my good Sir, you will resent such conduct."

"I scarcely think him worthy the anger of any reasonable person," said General Falkland, with somewhat less of his usual equanimity; "but I think I shall not hurry Margaret to pay her devoirs to Lady Mac Call."

In truth, this additional proof of the worthy knight's vulgar impertinence seemed well-timed to Margaret's kind parent, who felt anxious to spare her the excitement of revisiting scenes which he knew to be fraught to her mind with so much of painful interest; and Margaret now acquainted with her old friend's secret, was also glad to avail herself of this pretence to refrain from permitting him, as was his wont, to accompany her that to spot, the very distant sight of which had so lately affected him so much.

Their visiters remained with them some days, and were sooned joined by others in the neighborhood, and some of the many who had sought and obtained invitations when in town.

Margaret found herself called on for exertion, mental and bodily, and was repaid for the fulfilment of her duties by that cheerfulness and serenity of mind which virtue obtains even in the absence of dearer delights; and which is, perhaps, all that it is wise to wish for in a world of sorrow and disappointment.

## CHAPTER IV.

Une jeune fille qui aime croit que tout le monde l'ignore. Elle met sur ses yeux le voile qu'elle porte sur son cœur ; mais lorsqu'il est soulevé par une main aimée, alors les secrets de son cœur s'échappent comme par une barrière ouverte, et les doux épanchements de son âme succèdent aux mystères dont elle s'environnait.

ST. PIERRE.

It was late in October, when General Falkland, seated in his study, received the letter, which brought tears to the eyes of him who read, as of the amiable being who penned it; but there was in the breast of the former a mingled sentiment of hope, which had found no place in the heart of the writer, at the time of its diction, and which, though scarcely defined by the mind of General Falkland, had yet within it something of tenderness which gave a luxury to the flow of his fine sympathy.

Why should I hope it, said he inwardly, with a sigh, as, folding the letter, he rose from his chair, as he sought the apartment of his daughter. Margaret was not there—allured by the composing stillness of an autumnal day, she had wandered out alone. The Countesse Olinska was writing in her husband's room. Mr. Montgomery was gone to visit some old friends in Glasgow, and the Duc de Chatelain had left a few days previously in all the disappointment of unrequited love—a love which he had sought in all the impetuosity of youthful feelings, and declared with the disinterestedness and want of due consideration, peculiar only to very early manhood.

There were still some guests remaining in the hospitable precincts of Walrond Castle. But these were chiefly young men, devoted to the sports of the field, and these were on this day revelling in the delights of killing heath-fowl, on the neighboring moors.

As Margaret walked by the silver stream, which accompanied the path that led to her private garden, she paused to enjoy the sweet stillness which reigned around—she felt melancholy, for her sister's letters, though uncomplaining, breathed not of happiness, and in the account she gave of her health, she could scarcely read as much of hope, of complete restoration by her projected journey to Italy, as she herself expressed. The remembrance of one still dearer passed again and again before her, with a sadness which she could not repress; and she felt thankful that no human eye, not even that of her dear Contesse Olinska, was near to mark the tears which rose unbidden, and which she found it a luxury in solitary hours to give vent to.

Again she walked on. The flutter of a heath-hen's wing, as it arose from the water's brink, seemed to entice her to continue her progress, and she proceeded to the garden, which was the object of her especial care, there to sigh over the withering tints which autumn had lately spread over many of her favorite flowers, and to gather a nosegay from the few which she felt to be so valuable because they were the last. The jessamine still threw its flaunting white blossoms round her little bower, and as she placed several of its starry sprigs amid those she held in her hands, she said aloud—Poor Evelyn! She could not but recall his affectionate entreaties—that she would send to him in the hour of anxiety and distress—she thought of her sister—of the dreadful possibility which had more than once recurred to her, when melancholy sensations occasioned fears which, in lighter days, she would not have admitted, and she compared his generous and disinterested friendship to the flowers which bloomed when their companions deserted the garden beneath the influence of a less genial sun.

Scarcely had she uttered the words, when her father stood beside her; he smiled as he repeated. "Ah, yes, poor Evelyn! he does, indeed, deserve your sym-

pathy, my dearest girl. You will feel it doubly when you read this." So saying, he put the letter which he had just received into Margaret's hand. As she read, the tears so lately shed were once more renewed, and she restored it silently to her father. While the sigh which he heard again revived in his breast those hopes which he would not express, but which soothed the sorrow he often felt while witnessing the daily declension of the spirits of one who had been by nature so gay.

There is something in the mingled society of a crowd which is sometimes useful in diverting the mind from dwelling on a painful theme, although the effects which such scenes produce cannot be lasting; and it is, perhaps, better for those whose minds are of a reflective habit to seek the comparative loneliness of a country life. Here, in the contemplation of the Creator's works, the thoughts are gently led to a tone of placid resignation; a consciousness, which the survey of nature inspires, that He, who made all things, and by whom they are continually upheld, guides and governs the minutest event for the well-being of his creatures, and a more resigned frame of mind ensues, enabling the sufferer to relinquish even the dearest wish which his Providence seemed to withhold.

Margaret acknowledged, with daily and hourly gratitude, the advantage she derived from the quiet and repose allowed her, in which to muse on the memory of past feelings and events, and while she did so, in as dispassionate a manner as the ardour of her nature would admit of, she owned to herself the folly which had blinded her in her attachment for one whose principles and conduct were so ill-calculated to promote the happiness of domestic life, and whose affection towards her had never surpassed the boundaries of friendship.

Sometimes her thought reverted to that which Mr. Montgomery had told her with regard to his love for

her sister, and the struggle which she had witnessed in that sister's mind, at the period of her marriage, had more than once given her cause to suspect that their attachment was mutual. However that might be, it cost her no slight pang to relinquish, in thought, the hopes of her early years; but with the attempt came a measure of success which enabled her to reply to her father's conversation of that day in another manner than she could once have done.

As he kindly took her hand, and proposed a walk through the adjoining wood, he thus began: "My dearest girl, I have long watched, with painful anxiety, the depression of your once lively spirits. You have, indeed, made every effort to conceal the secret sorrow of your heart. You have exerted your talents to please me, and to render my home dear as ever, but, my dear Margaret, it is not—it cannot be, as happy while I see that some unrevealed sorrow preys upon you; and, though I would not, with rude hand, rend the veil aside with which it is most natural and most graceful that youth should strive to conceal its affection for one of another sex, still it would gladden your own father's heart could you make me a sharer in that which grieves you. Will you do so, love?—at your own time—in your own way—but will you do so? Be assured there is none upon earth who can, by the tenderest affection, and the most dear-taught experience, be better able and willing to sympathise with you."

General Falkland did not often allow himself to speak so freely on a subject which most interested him. His feelings were too keen to admit of his giving frequent expression to their dictates, for he dreaded an excitement which he thought contrary to the exercise of clear and impartial judgment, but on this occasion, which he had long sought for, he found it impossible to repress his anxious desire to become the depository of his beloved daughter's cares; and, while the kindness of his words and manner drew tears from her

eyes, Margaret could not refuse the confidence which he sought; and, with a voice tremulous with emotion, with maidenly timidity, she confessed her long attachment for Hamilton, her dread that it was unrequited, her fears respecting the manner of this present life, and the reason which had induced her successively to reject the suits of Gilbert, Lord Frederick Ashton, and the Duc de Chatelain. Then, on her father's neck, she shed the mingled tears of love, of shame, and of regret, while she felt, by his tender silence, and by the emotion which he could not conceal, that she had too long concealed from such a father that which he had suspected so long with anxious affection and sorrow.

"I will not upbraid you," at length he said, "dearest Margaret, that you have so long withheld from me the secret of your heart. Well do I know my anguish has been the most severe; but I regret it the more because, had you not done so, I might sooner have removed from your mind a hope, which I know not whether to grieve for, or to rejoice in as a vain one. Do not think me harsh or unkind when I say that you have not acted prudently on this occasion. Perhaps, indeed, prudence could scarcely be expected with feelings keen at yours; but the fact of my daughter's permitting an unrequited attachment to gain so firm a hold of her affections is, I confess, a heavy grief to mine. Margaret, it becomes my duty to tell you that the love of the unfortunate Hamilton was—would that I could speak of it as past—is—for your sister, for my beloved and unhappy Susan."

Margaret's tears were dried; but she leaned more heavily on her father's arm, and felt as if scarcely able to continue her walk. Little did she think such a secret in his possession, and she trembled with agitation as he proceeded.

"Had I been aware of this melancholy circumstance, nothing could have induced me to"



suit of Lord de Tracey. Such a conduct had been contrary to my principles and to my feelings; but the generous impulse which actuated my Susan in concealing from every eye the circumstance of their mutual affection, completely, fatally, succeeded in silencing a suspicion which her illness last year had for a moment awakened; and it was not till a few weeks ago that the confession of Eric's ill-fated love reached my ears, and confirmed those fears which the agitation of my poor Susan at the time of her marriage again aroused. He wrote to me himself, with that generosity of mind which, amid all his errors, pleads his forgiveness with me. He told me, in all the bitterness of self-reproach, the noble, the heroic conduct of my beloved young friend Evelyn. He enclosed to me a letter, which I now hold, from that disinterested and high-minded man, and which you shall read presently. He acquainted me with the import of his own answer—of the fatal mistake, which he trusted did not originate from any just conclusions in Gilbert's mind—enjoined on me the task of acquainting you with his unfortunate attachment for your sister; and concludes with his usual impetuosity in every feeling, by consigning his own fate to despair, and imploring every blessing upon you and your dear sister. Read this, love, and you will then judge whether a father cannot sometimes form a hope for a beloved daughter, the disappointment of which cannot but cause the deepest regret."

Margaret read the letter which Hamilton enclosed, and the tears flowed fast from her eyes. No human eye could read the cause of her emotion; but her father silently hinted that such generosity might perhaps turn those drops of anguish into joy. When she again looked up to General Falkland, her tears were dried, and, with something of pride in her voice and manner, she said, "My dear father shall no longer witness the weakness of a foolish, blind, mistaken girl; but if you

should ever trace the expression of regret on my countenance, or see me less gay than is my wont, I trust you will give a sister credit for sympathy, which she cannot, which she must not, withhold."

General Falkland pressed her to his arms.—"Let us not again, love," said he, "agitate you by recurring to this sad subject. I do indeed trust you. I know the tenderness of your love for Susan—nor can I be myself as I once was, until I learn that that dear girl's health is re-established, and till I read in her letters more of that undisturbed serenity of mind, which I fear is all that I can now hope for her. Oh, Margaret, may you never feel the bitterness of self-reproach which I experience while thinking that I have been in part the cause of uniting her to one whom she does not love!" It was now Margaret's turn to speak those words of comfort which she could scarcely feel; and, as she did so, they approached the house, and the return of the shooting party, and the presence of the Contesse Olinska, who, leaning on her husband's arm, approached them, put a stop to farther conversation.

"What a very improper flirtation," said she to Margaret smiling, and taking her arm. Then looking in her face, she saw the traces of recent agitation, and, with that tact for which she was remarkable, turned the conversation to lively matters, which brought a smile to the face of General Falkland, and restored serenity to Margaret's mind, respecting him at least.

"What a deuced fine sport you have, General," said a tall young man, who advanced with a well stocked velvetine jacket, from which he dragged sundry braces of birds, with a countenance in which impudence and exultation contended for the mastery—"Damn me! You never told me you had such famous sport so near you; I never stirred two miles from your door, and yet have loaded one of your Gillie's

with birds and hares, till I dare say the poor fellow wishes my aim less sure, or my Manton less correct; and, you see, I have taken the office of keeper myself too." "Not exactly," said the General, smiling, who had taken special pains to reserve that part of his shooting ground for his friend Olinska, and who felt a little disappointed at the assurance with which Mr. Mathews had, un-invited, betaken himself to its clearance.

"Why how so?" said the imperturbable Mr. Mathews—"don't you see me laden like a dray-horse?"—On my life, I am so heated I must positively take a warm bath before dinner, or I won't be fit to be seen, laid up with one of my deuced colds, and then Miss \_\_\_\_\_ adieu to that duet, which I promised I should sing with you,"—so saying, he whistled an opera tune, and ran to the door, from which one of the servants was that moment coming out, with a note in his hand, which he delivered to General Falkland. "Damn that fellow's impudence," said Sir John Hardy, an elderly gentleman, with a crumpled yellow face, who stood fingering his gun in no enviable temper, as he looked after the last speaker. "What would make that fellow blush would make another fly his country. I have not had two shots to day, after toiling over those moors till I have scarcely a leg to stand upon, and he, with the utmost coolness, takes possession of the General's best preserve, and comes here as the hero of the day."

"Why, Margaret," said General Falkland, putting the note he had just read into his daughter's hand,—"here is Montgomery in very bad humor with his trip, found half his friends dead, and the other half from home, and intends being with us this evening. I hope Contesse Olinska will not object to our delaying the dinner for half an hour, as he cannot be here till after seven at soonest."

Sir John's blank face looked yet more blank. He contented himself, however, with muttering something about dinner spoiled, fish diddled, fricandeau destroyed; for he had the morning's bill of fare by heart, and entered the house to conceal his disappointment, while the Contesse said it would be delightful to stay out a little longer; and while the rest of the party repaired to their toilette, she enlisted Margaret in her expedition, and they wandered through the garden in earnest conversation for some time.

On their return, the rattling wheels of a broken-down vehicle, from the neighboring village, announced the expected return of Mr. Montgomery, and he was soon perceived extricating himself from the society of a large picture, which he had been supporting with some difficulty between his knee and his portmanteau, and issuing orders to the servants for its being safely deposited in his apartment, when he perceived Margaret.

"Well," said he, "I'm not sorry to be back again, I can tell you. Such a jumbling and noise as I have had you never saw the like. Gude save us! what's the use of a man living to see half his friends tumble into their graves before him, and the other half galanting about, as if there was nothing to do in the world but jaunting about in steam-boats and post chaises, from morning to night, till a body's bones are just mangled? But bless me, what a picture," said he, stopping short, and looking steadfastly at the Contesse Olinska, who had merely thrown a veil over her dark hair, which she had lifted at his approach, and smiled with her usual benignity at the extraordinary character who stood before her.

Margaret introduced her friend, and their combined efforts succeeded in restoring Mr. Montgomery good humor. The proceedings of the toilette produced no such good effects on Sir John E who was watching the announcement of dinner

unrestrained impatience as Margaret entered the drawing-room.

"Well, Miss," said he, "I trust this old painter will make his appearance shortly, or I shall positively faint with hunger."

"Oh, he is come," said Margaret, ringing the bell as she spoke, and in a few minutes the party proceeded to the dining-room.

Luckily the fish had been but a few minutes too long on the fire, and the remainder of the dinner had suffered less than Sir John's most hopeful anticipations could have imagined. He was therefore too busily engaged for sometime to disturb the loquacity of Mr. Mathews, who continued, in spite of General Falkland's gentle hints that he hoped he would not repeat his visits to that preserve, to boast of his sporting feats on that day.

Mr. Montgomery lowered an indignant look upon him, and whispered to Margaret, who had insisted that on that day he should sit by her, "A very impertinent fellow." A young Scotch lawyer, who sat by Countess Olinska, gave her also rather a more detailed account of his success than she desired; and she soon contrived to relinquish his proffered attention to Mr. Mac Farlane, while she turned to the General, who was always in good spirits while she entertained him with her varied flow of wit and good humor. Margaret felt a pang of conscience, while she did the same on her part, and dexterously contrived to force the attention of a quiet Mr. Reynolds to the volubility of the insolent Mr. Mathews. Count Olinska was too much engaged in meditating on some of his schemes of diplomacy to heed the crossness of Sir John Hardy, who, truth to say, was too much fatigued by his walk and his dinner to wish for much conversation; and Margaret had therefore full leisure to listen to the detailed account of her old friend's journey to Glasgow, and all the anecdotes attendant on what he conceived to be so wonderful an exertion for him.

The picture he had found in an old clothes shop, and the place assigned for him at table, had somewhat restored his equanimity; so he continued to relate his adventures with a mixture of cheerfulness and crossness which the remembrance of past injuries still occasioned. "What do you think, my dear lady," said he, warming as he proceeded, "the first thing I did, on landing at Greenock, was to call on my old friend, Johnston, whom I found married, for the second time, to a widow, with six squalling brats. The whole house in confusion because it was the birth-day of one of them; and not a wink of sleep, or a moment of quiet, could I get for the drinking and hallooing, and dancing that went on all night. Folks have little to do to marry into such a nest. I showed him two or three miniatures I had with me. The man used to have some taste for pictures; but now he does not, I verily think, ken the odds between a Raphael and a sign post.

"That comes o' marrying widows. Well, I soon silenced him, and took my place in a coach to Glasgow. The next day, as ill-luck would have it, every other place except my own was occupied by a set of daft-like laddies o' midshipmen just come out o' a man o'-war—all flinging and capering about like a set o' demented creatures. The rain began to pour in torrents just as we left the town, and it seemed as if fate had determined I was to be pestered with bairns. For, on the outside of the coach, sat a pale sickly-looking wife with a squalling brat in her arms, who filled up each interval of the callant's stramashing; at last, they all declared that they would take the wretched infant inside. The coach was stopped, and they swore vehemently that every man in the coach should take his turn every five minutes of holding the bairn. I protested against this; but all in vain. They vowed that the youngest should begin, and so on, till it came to my turn; and so in they brought it, dripping with rain, and screaming louder than themselves. I put my

head out of the window, and told the coachman I would get out at Port Glasgow. But another put his head out of the other side, swore I was drunk, and told him to drive on—so on we went, and sure enough, when they had each dandled the dirty brat the five minutes, they handed it over to me. I declared I could not hold it—that the child would perish in my hands, and that they would be hung for child murder. ‘Dam-me,’ said they all with one breath, ‘my old buck, but you shall do it,’ and so, just to keep the peace, I took the child, and thought I should never get out of this pandemonium.”

Margaret laughed immoderately. The action which accompanied poor Mr. Montgomery’s relation of his misfortunes could not but arrest the attention of the rest of the party. For, as one startled by some hideous vision, he pushed his chair from the table, and seemed as if still in all the dread and horror of holding an infant in his arms. The laughter became general, and he was forced to await the restoration of order to recruit his temper, and he concluded in a lower voice the history of his farther adventures.

He had, however, assigned himself a place in the eyes of all the party as a decided character, and however unwilling to sustain the circumstances attendant on such a situation in society, he found himself unable to do so, and became the chief object of entertainment. He retired, therefore, early, in none of the best of humors, and it required all the art of which the ladies of the party were possessed to restore him next morning to comfort, and a sense of his own dignity, which was necessary to the well being of a character like his, soured by disappointment; although by nature gifted with much kindness of disposition and nobleness of heart.

The cultivation of that talent, to which he had devoted his life, had indeed so nurtured and refined his taste that it was not difficult for the least gifted to per-

ceive that there was something more than ordinary in his intellectual capacity; and, in the feelings which lent expression to the feeblest of his efforts in the fine arts, while it needed a mind far more refined than that of most men to appreciate the delicacy of his taste, and the enlarged acquirements of his intellect. These were indeed sometimes concealed by the ebullitions of an ungoverned temper, and the sourness of a disappointed heart, and might prove to the considerate, who valued his merits as they deserved, while they pitied his unhappiness, how impotent is every human device, in earthly attainment, whether in science or in art, to bestow, by its enjoyment, the peace of mind which can be derived but from one source alone. True, indeed, the blandishments of refinement in taste, the more valuable possession of a cultivated mind, and well informed intellect, do enrich the joys of those whose chief happiness is fixed beyond the changes which time can work even on these; but to render them permanently valuable, or give the full sway to that enlargement, which the mind grasps at, who can deny that it is the religious alone who taste the full sweetness of science, or rejoice in those endless beauties of creation, of which art is but the feeble imitation?



## CHAPTER V.

They say this Town is full of Cozenage,  
As nimble jugglers that deceive the eye;  
Disguised cheaters, prating mountebanks;  
And many such like libertines of sin.

*Comedy of Errors.*—SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN Lord de Tracey and his bride arrived in Paris, they alighted at the door of one of the the most splendid Hotels in the Rue Rivoli, and were received not only with that respect which their rank and appearance would have inspired; but with a degree of interest which seemed to shew to Susan that he who was now her husband was every where esteemed and beloved as she trusted he deserved to be.

In the guilelessness of her nature, she knew not how much of servility and self-interest may lurk beneath the ostensible shew of good-will and friendliness; still less was she aware of the utter want of principle which pervades many of the inhabitants of that Capital into which she had just entered; nor did she once suspect that the friendly courtesy which extended to herself, as well as towards Lord de Tracey, was provoked by the love of ill-gotten gain with which the master of that Hotel had already so much enriched himself at the expense of her husband.

As she looked around on the splendor of the furniture, which ornamented, but did not crowd, the spacious apartments they were formed to adorn she smiled her approval to Lord de Tracey; then gently hinted at the immense expense which must have been incurred thus to decorate an Hotel. A frown passed over the brow of her husband, and was not unobserved by Susan, who, fearing she had offended him, thanked him kindly for preparing for her so luxurious an abode.

“Thank heaven, my Susan!” said he, resuming his wonted affectionate manner, “Thank heavens! I need not place my bride in a dungeon such as——” He paused, as if about to say something of which he repented; then, taking her hand, he led her to the window which overlooked the gardens of the Tuilleries, at that time filled with gaily-dressed people of all ages and ranks, and asked her whether she did not think those preferable to the dusky ring of Hyde Park?

“It is certainly a very gay scene; but——” Susan sighed as she spoke; for, at sight of so brilliant a multitude, the thought flashed across her that amongst them there was not one being she knew. Sad thoughts to enter the mind of so young a bride, while he, the future companion of her life, stood beside her: but daily conviction rendered the trial she had imposed upon herself more hard to bear; she did not love him. The sigh was however unheard, or unnoticed by Lord de Tracey; for, as she spoke, the door opened, and the master of the Hotel put a note into his hands, saying, “Madame la Comtesse has been every day for the last week expecting you, and desired me to give you this, the moment of your arrival.”

Susan was not so entirely absorbed in her melancholy musings, but that she heard the words with which the note was delivered; but it occasioned little curiosity. She continued mechanically to gaze on the scene before her; then, suddenly recollecting herself, and fearing lest she should betray that indifference which she feared to feel, she enquired, “whether Lord de Tracey had many friends in Paris, and hoped that, if he wished to visit them, he would not fear she should feel lonely if he left her. All this is, you know, so new to me, and I shall have some arrangements to make which will occupy me till dressing time.” Lord de Tracey looked at her with an eye in which something like suspicion mingled with a nameless fear of blame; but, perceiving nothing in that sweet counten-

and her usual simplicity and kindness, he strove to repress his secret feelings, and gaily replied, "Yes, love; I have many acquaintances in Paris. This note is from a friend, the Contesse de Rambouillet, a most elegant and accomplished woman, whom I doubt not you will like when you know her. If you do not dislike my leaving you for an hour, I shall go and call upon her, and I have no doubt shall easily persuade her to come and see you to-morrow, if you like it.

"Oh, certainly," said Susan; "any friend of yours I shall be glad to know."

Lord de Tracey embraced her; then, whistling an opera tune, bade her adieu, and, promising to return in an hour, left the room. When alone, Susan threw herself on one of the ottomans, and, with bitter feelings, such as she should not have wished to betray to any human eye, reviewed the last fortnight of her life, and fondly hope that in doing so she should gather fresh strength of mind to bear up against the bitter regrets and disappointments with which she found her heart oppressed.

It was not now of Hamilton that she thought. His image would indeed obtrude itself before the eye of memory; but she *dared* not trust herself to linger there. "Am I not the wife of another? and did I not choose, myself, the path which lies before me? but did I then so perfectly know the character, the disposition of him who is my companion?" Alas! that so short a time of intimate communion should have already revealed so much that was fatal to her peace, and which seemed to involve her in so much future difficulty. In examining her every word she could not tax herself with having breathed one which could have provoked uneasiness of feeling, far less jealousy, in the mind of her husband; yet had he bestowed on her the bitterest reproaches, and accused her of deceit, even of falsehood. Vainly she had sought to obtain from him an explanation of his accusation. Lord de Tracey knew

not himself of what to accuse her; but Elliott's words rankled in his mind, and, from that moment, he tormented himself, even at the time he obtained the object of his long-cherished passion, and became the tormentor of her likewise to whose happiness he had sworn to devote himself. The consciousness of his own errors was now smothered by the delusive thought that she had been, at least, as much to blame as himself, in reserving from him the secret of her former attachment; and though Susan sought to evince towards him that perfect confidence which she resolved from the time of their union ever to maintain; yet there was in her manner a constraint, of which she was not herself aware; but which his awakened jealousy observed and magnified; and, while he was too proud to sue for confidence, he was too *exigeant* not to desire it; and finding, or thinking he found, the want of it, his attachment towards her was daily diminishing, in spite of the passionate admiration which her beauty inspired, and which neither sorrow nor ill-health had yet impaired.

Poor Susan recalled in her loneliness the many nameless proofs which now recurred to her of his betrayal of a suspicious temper; and of the uneasy manner with which he had sometimes reverted to the past. Still, however, the persuasion she felt of his integrity and honorable character dissuaded her even from secretly blaming him. She looked inwardly; and, with that tenderness of conscience which her disposition and her principles infused in every self-examination, she failed not to find matter for humiliation; though a less severe judge could scarcely have found room to attach to her the faintest shadow of reproach! And humbly praying for strength to love and to obey as she desired to do, a gentle calm overspread her melancholy thoughts, and much of sweetness mingled with the tears which flowed from her eyes, as she turned to the remembrance of her dear home and

those loved beings whom she had so lately left. She remembered the high opinion which her revered parent entertained for her husband, and thought how much weight his estimation should give to her hopes of future happiness with him. She remembered the cause of her self-sacrifice, and, with that devotedness which the tenderness of years had cherished, she rejoiced to think that she had at least completely triumphed over every wish that could impede the accomplishment of her beloved sister's hopes.

If she were mistaken, as she doubtless was, in thus imposing upon herself so hard a task, it was an error for which she would be doubtless acquitted at the tribunal of charity; but it is one which the strongest in virtue should avoid, while yet it is time to recede.

How blest is she who, in the review of years of such a struggle, can thank that guardian Power which has enabled her to combat, and finally to triumph over, the difficulties which union without affection must bring to the feeling heart, and who receives the reward of her virtuous efforts in the esteem and love of her husband, and the approbation of Heaven and of men!

It was in mercy concealed from Susan, for some time subsequent to her marriage, that her husband's affairs were deeply involved, in consequence of his indulgence in that fatal passion so ensnaring to those who are once led into the vortex where its votaries are hurried. The early manhood of Lord de Tracey was spent for the most part on the Continent, his father having made over to him that part of his estates which he possessed in France. To one so young, and so eager as he was in the pursuit of pleasure, there were few attractions in the retired situation of the Chateau Montmorenci to induce him to reside there, although his presence was there frequently required; but the distance from the gay Capital was not so great but that he could choose that scene more suitable to

his tastes, as his place of abode, and duly attend, as he imagined, to the management of his estate.

Young, rich, and handsome as he was, the circle of his gay friends soon extended around him; and while he deemed himself fortunate in thus beholding himself the centre of so much admiration and regard, he lacked wisdom to discover the source whence all the adulation which he received was derived, until the great diminution of his fortune awoke him in a measure from his dream, and revealed, not his own folly and blindness, but the meanness and duplicity of these pretended friends. The discovery was made in time to rescue him from total destruction; and his pride was sufficient to enable him to conceal, in a great measure, from the world the effect of his imprudence and reckless dissipation: but there were some, among his old associates, who still exercised over him the tyrannic sway under which he had so long been blindly led; and, among these, was the Contesse de Rambouillet. She was a young and gay widow, possessed of superior outward attractions, which every blandishment of art was employed to adorn; but, destitute of all virtuous and ennobling principle, her life was spent in the contrivance of schemes to ensure to herself the enjoyment of those unhallowed pleasures which alone could gratify a mind so constituted.

Ambitious, beyond all ordinary bounds of woman's desires, she sought not only the enjoyment of being esteemed one of the most beautiful and powerful leaders of fashion, in the highest circles of Parisian Society, not only to be sought and sighed for by the noblest of the land, as well as by the humblest and most despairing of her numerous followers; but, by that strange incongruity in the mind, which is in fact the homage vice pays to virtue, she resolved that by her artifice she should silence the tongue of scandal, and stifle the very whisper of reproach, by appearing also as the leader of the virtuous, the learned, and the

refined: and, strange to say, she succeeded.—Her *salons* were crowded with nobles, *savans*, and even divines—in her boudoirs, the whispers of confidence were heard from the lips of the young and the pure, as well as from those of others, who dared not spread the report of the favor with which they were received. There was a tyranny in the influence she held over those who once entered the snares spread over them, which secured alike her character and her secrets; but which set the seal of misery on the consciences of those who still retained a sense of evil, and converted open friendship into concealed but deadly hatred.

Such was the power which the Contesse de Rambouillet still exerted over the mind of Lord de Tracey; such was the woman whom he was about to introduce to his lovely innocent wife. Aware that in doing so he sought not to injure her, and that the world would exonerate him from all blame, since she had still power to assume a purity and dignity of character which she did possess, he dared not extricate himself from the snare which her artifice had laid for him; and which she had contrived to strengthen, by conferring on him pecuniary obligations, which he had not now the power to nullify.—It was these which had enabled him to conceal alike from his friends and from the world the difficulties in which a life of dissipation and gambling had involved him; and which he had not courage to confess to a proud and haughty father, whose affections he had never possessed, and whose good opinion he cared not to ensure: but from whom he could not brook reproach.—And while, with all his secret contempt for the Contesse's character, he felt grateful to her, as the means of putting him in possession of the object of his admiration and passionate love; yet a secret consciousness of evil made him sigh to be liberated from the thralldom of this wicked woman; and perhaps, but for the hint which Elliot had thrown out on the day of his marriage, and the many suspicions

to which that had given rise, his union with so amiable, so estimable a person as Susan might have saved him from that to which he was now about to return, silencing every remonstrance of conscience, by repeating to himself, "She has deceived me; why should I fear to wrong her?"

Had Lord de Tracey, indeed, been ever the exclusive and chosen object of his wife's preference, she need not now have dreaded a rival in the Contesse, whose attractions were of that sophisticated nature which must forever have lost their charm to one so warmly attached to her as was Lord de Tracey; nor, as his virtuous and high-minded wife, need she have trembled for the honor and reputation of a husband in whose faith she trusted, and which she made it her daily and fervent prayer to reward, as she deemed it merited; but there was a tone of demoralizing debasement in the terms by which their intimacy was secured, which, had she known, Susan could not have acquiesced in without the deepest sorrow and regret. There were manners, and habits, and society, into which this intimacy led her husband, which she failed not soon to perceive; and which, young and innocent as she was, infused into her mind suspicions which she felt to be alike injurious to her husband, and to her own peace of mind.

When she first became personally acquainted with the Contesse de Rambouillet, the deceit with which she managed to conceal her real disposition and character, succeeded in blinding Susan to her own and her husband's danger; but as she discovered and with the eye of integrity she was not long in doing so, that the Contesse was the secret agent of those companies where gambling at a high rate was the chief, and sometimes the sole, amusement; when she found herself often excluded from these, directly by her husband, but indirectly by other means, the favorable opinion which she had hastily taken up of this artful wo-



man, in consequence of the recommendation of her husband, she soon found herself obliged to relinquish; and in silence, but with many tears and bitter regrets, did she lament the misery which she saw before her, in the pursuit of that life which she had chosen. Sometimes indeed, when on her lonely pillow she vented her fruitless sorrow, her mind would, in spite of herself, revert to the object of her earliest affection, and her tears flowed faster as she thought her love might have saved *him* from the pursuit of his fatal passion, while she felt that her husband's discerning eye had failed to discover that affection in her towards himself which might otherwise have produced the same happy results.

If human agency, indeed, can arrest the progress of vicious passions, perhaps poor Susan was scarcely mistaken, in *this* her judgment; for, though Lord de Tracey could not reproach her with having by word or manner forfeited her claim on his esteem or his affection, and though the mildest answer had been ever given to the harsh words which the consciousness of the evil course he was pursuing had frequently caused him to utter towards her; still there was in his heart a conviction which neither her implicit and ready acquiescence in all his wishes, her gentleness of voice, and sweetness in manner, could efface from his mind that he was not beloved; and, when returning home at a very late hour from the midnight haunts of his dissipation, he would sometimes behold upon her lovely, but melancholy countenance, the traces of sorrow, and see her striving to assume that cheerfulness which her heart belied, he would stifle every self reproach by taxing her with regret of past joys, which she had herself forfeited, and then, without condescending to seek for a refutation of his unjust accusations, he would again hurry from her presence to the gaieties of the Contesse's circle, where amusement, which she well knew how to diversify for his pleasure,

was ever ready in all shapes, to court and to allure him from the society of his lovely and neglected wife.

From time to time the Contesse herself would seek Lady de Tracey, and, with an affectation of kindness and regard which disgusted Susan, would exhort her to be more lively, and to enter more heartily into her husband's tastes. Occasionally she collected at her house a *Coterie* from among the most distinguished of Parisian society, where Susan was courted, and which a sense of her obedience to her husband's expressed wishes induced her to attend. From these parties all that could offend the judgment of the most fastidious was carefully precluded, and at these, admired and *fêlée* as she was, by persons of all ranks and ages, Susan might have enjoyed herself, but for the watchful eye of suspicion, which she felt was upon her.

The jealousy of Lord de Tracey seemed to increase with his own laxity of conduct; and, despite of the innocence of her mind, and the dignity of her manner, which preserved Susan from the temptations to which an injured wife is subject, Susan experienced so painful a sense of his suspicion that, when induced to join in the conversation or amusements of these soirées, she began almost to doubt herself; and to sigh for the hour which should relieve her at once from society which afforded to her neither satisfaction nor amusement. Strange to say, that under all these very unfavorable circumstances, the heart of Susan never felt more tenderly towards her husband than at this time. His beauty and the grace of his manner, which shone so conspicuously among others, were not unobserved or unappreciated by her; and often did she long for what would seem to her a favorable opportunity for entreating him to bestow upon her more of his society, and to release himself from the thralldom under which she saw him bound, though she knew not wherefore, to the Contesse de Rambouillet.

Yet how was this to be done? there was so little in his manner towards her to inspire confidence; there was not enough of love, she thought in her own heart towards him, to warrant her in persuading him to relinquish what he seemed to think his chief enjoyment, and for which she dared not blame him, since he stood alike acquitted in her judgment, as well as in that of others, of all that she would have dared to blame him for.

Still there was in the mind of Susan a sense of thankfulness for the degree of heightened interest and affection which she entertained towards him, and, with that sanguine expectation of youth which a less temporary and more blessed ground of hope encouraged, she looked forward to the day when he might yet be all to her which, as a virtuous and faithful wife, she trusted he might become; and when he should meet with a full reward of his affection in her increased tenderness.

It was while engaged in such contemplation that Lord de Tracey entered her room one day, accompanied by a young man whose countenance struck her with so agreeable an impression as to make her receive with pleasure the introduction of her husband, as he named Lord Frederick Ashton. Susan was aware that he had been attached to her sister, and, with a feeling of interest which his situation occasioned, she welcomed him with a warmth of manner unusual with her towards strangers, and which the keen eye of Lord de Tracey did not fail to observe. The book which she held in her hand had dropped upon her knee, as the passage which she was reading had given rise to the contemplations from which their entrance had aroused her; and, as she rose to curtsy to her guest, it fell upon the floor. Lord Frederick stooped to pick it up, and, as he did so, glanced at its contents.

"You will not thank us—*me*, I ought to say—for saving you from so agreeable an occupation."

"I cannot complain of such an interruption," said Susan, smiling, and glancing kindly at her husband; for at that moment her previous ruminations had filled her mind with anticipations favorable to them both.

The smile and the glance were however both misinterpreted, and Lord de Tracy looked with an angry expression from Lord Frederick to his wife, till the latter felt herself confused, she knew not why.

Lord Frederick was busily employed in tracing mentally the resemblance which he found, or thought he found between Susan and her sister, and, to enable him to pursue so agreeable an occupation, he continued the subject which accident had opened for him. "I do not wonder," he said, "that Cowper should be *a* favorite if not *the* favorite poet of ladies. Though in his great poems he is seldom musical, yet his thoughts are always correct, always true to nature when he describes nature, and in the deepest reverence he shows her great author, there is enough to sublimize the most discordant measure. What music can indeed replace the absence of high thought, or rather, what is really music but that which inspires it?"

Susan listened; she was pleased with the tone of mind which those few words conveyed, and, merely assenting with a smile, he continued:—

"But I must not trouble you with my feelings on this subject, although I flatter myself that you agree with me. May I ask you where you were reading?"

"I think," said Susan, coloring, as if she feared her thoughts would be known by the disclosure, yet too ingenuous to tell a falsehood—"I think it was just here, where he speaks of his remembered delight in reading Milton at the age of fourteen,

"Admiring still, and still admiring, with regret, supposed  
The joy half lost, because not sooner found."

"Is it not natural?" said she, looking up with animation, and stealing furtively a glance at her husband, as if she had revealed a secret which she was afraid he might not care to hear.

But she might have been spared that fear. Lord de Tracey had taken up a newspaper, and, scarcely knowing on what his eyes rested, was inwardly blaming himself for bringing into his wife's society one so much more apparently suited to her tastes than himself. Once indeed he could also have joined such a conversation, for, when at a distance from these scenes and that company whose influence was so fatal to the developement of his mental advantages, he had discovered a taste and feeling with which nature had largely endowed him, and which his talents had aided him with few extraneous helps to improve.

What multiplied evils arise from the indulgence of one vicious propensity! It is not only the results, which may be foreseen even in the hour of passion, from its indulgence, but the thousand nameless attendants of one solitary sin multiply till it becomes a hydra-headed monster, from which the poor victim would fain escape, when it is perhaps too late. Lord de Tracey was such a victim. Blest not only with superior outward and mental attractions, with high birth and station, in possession of the chosen object of his heart's affections, and the good opinion of his friends, he chose to neglect or surrender all these, rather than relinquish the false excitement of one hurtful passion into which he had been led by a wicked woman at an age of inexperience, when he failed to seek for others more ennobling, and which now blinded him to the greatest value of the treasure he possessed; impeded his enjoyment in refined and exalted pursuits; and left him a prey to every wild and ungenerous thought which the one cherished evil generated.

Lord Frederick Ashton could not long remain in the society of Susan without discovering in her that purity of heart and singleness of intention which so heightened her personal beauty, and which he had so ardently admired in her younger sister. He felt, in her society, as if he enjoyed a portion of that sweet being

who had made so forcible an impression on his heart, and the visit which he had intended should be a short one, and which he almost feared, because he thought that there could be but one in the world like Margaret, was prolonged till he felt himself called upon to apologize from the unreasonable time he had remained with Lady de Tracey, and, stretching out his hand to Lord de Tracey, he said—

“You are a happy fellow. Will you allow me sometimes to come and see you? I know no one but yourselves in Paris.” Lord de Tracey received this request with a coldness which surprised him, but, thinking his friend engrossed with the newspaper he still held in his hand, Lord Frederick bowed to Susan and left the room.

There was a silence of some moments, for Susan saw, by her husband’s countenance, that he was not pleased, though she could not tell why. The knowledge indeed of his jealous disposition crossed her mind; but then he had himself introduced his friend, and then left her to entertain him. What could she have done?

“I hope you are pleased,” said Lord de Tracey at length abruptly, still fixing his eyes on the newspaper.

“Pleased with your friend, do you mean?” said Susan. “Oh! yes, extremely so, he appears to be very agreeable.”

“Yes,” rejoined Lord de Tracey, “so you seemed to think.”

“And are you not of that opinion?” enquired Susan, rising, and going towards him.

“I *did* think so; but you can make me change my opinion whenever you like; and you have gone far towards doing so in the present instance.”

This was no time for Susan to enter upon the subject she most desired; for the tone and manner in which Lord de Tracey’s words were spoken were of so doubtful a nature that she could scarcely regard

them as complimentary. Nevertheless it was one which at that moment she could not pass by. Occupied as she had been for some time past, with the determination to use whatever influence she might still retain, to dissuade her husband from a course of ruinous dissipation.

"I wish to heaven," she said, eagerly laying her hand of that of Lord de Tracey, "I wish to heaven, dearest, that I could think so, because with all the earnestness of a faithful and affectionate wife, I would entreat—I would implore you on my knees, to relinquish the pursuit of that, which will, I fear, involve you in ruin."

Lord de Tracey turned deadly pale. For a moment the sight of his beautiful wife in tears, bending, almost kneeling before him, thus beseeching him with an energy of manner he had never before beheld in her, subdued the anger which her concluding words had combined with his former feelings, to complete: but resuming his harshness, he said, angrily, "What's all this? What fine scene is this you have got up? What pursuit? What ruin do you mean? Perhaps Lord Frederick Ashton, or some among your easily enchained slaves, have insinuated—By Heavens!" continued he, his indignation rising as he spoke, and striking his hand upon the table before him, "By Heavens! he shall rue it. The sneaking villain!"

"Lord Frederick has, I assure you, insinuated nothing," said Susan, meekly. "Alas! too, well you know," continued she, "that I never saw him; never spoke to him till this day."

"And wherefore, then," said Lord de Tracey, "does his presence immediately operate in bringing you thus in servile crouching at my feet? Wherefore, but by pretended anxiety on my account, after so long a silence, to conceal the passion—yes, the passion which I see he has already by his artfulness awakened."



Susan lifted her beautiful eyes to heaven. That imputation in a moment dried the current of her tears; but still those she had shed in the virtuous effort to save her husband at the expense of her own tranquillity, lingered on her own pale cheek. Lord de Tracey looked at her, and, conscience-struck, remained silent; composed by that momentary elevation of thought, and, humbled by a remembrance which never failed to humble her, Susan again spoke.

"One moment," she said, "must suffice to convince you that that reproach was unreasonable: but should I unguardedly have betrayed too much pleasure in Lord Frederick's society, to meet your wishes, believe me, while I tell you that it was experienced at first from the knowledge of his attachment for my beloved sister. You have been too much engaged lately, you know, to read her long letters; but I think you will remember my father's expression of regret that she was forced to reject him.—But it is not of Lord Frederick I would speak, though your introduction would have sufficient recommendation to my favorable regard."

"Would it?" said Lord de Tracey, with a tenderness, which, almost for the first time, thrilled through the heart of Susan with an exquisite pleasure, which amply rewarded her for the painful excitement of many days and weeks.

"Indeed, indeed it would," said she, as she returned the embrace with which he spoke: "but oh, dearest, it is one of far different tastes and feelings I would speak of."

"Who?" said Lord de Tracey, trembling and extricating himself from her embrace.

"The Contesse de Rambouillet," said Susan hesitatingly.

"And what of her?" said he, with a nervousness, and a return of that frown which never failed to send her to the heart of his wife.



"Alas!" said she, "I would not blame her, she also is your friend, but, till we came to Paris, I never knew you take so much delight in that fatal pursuit. Those cards—that table—Would to heaven you did not now!"

"Susan," said Lord de Tracey, with a voice in which rage mingled with the consciousness of his own injustice, "you have taken the wrong way to convert me into a fire-side humble husband by abusing my friends. And I desire henceforth that you meddle not with such matters. The Contesse de Rambouillet's character stands high in the world. She is elegant, talented, distinguished by the friendship of the best, and most exalted in this land, she is my friend, she has been my friend before I ever saw your face, and I owe her a debt of gratitude which I cannot pay, nor you either. Let me hear no more of this, I beg of you, and I will promise you not to suspect you or Lord Frederick either. Indeed," continued he, laughing, as if he had suddenly thought of a good joke which must put a stop to any thing farther like a scene, which he said he detested, "Indeed, after all, it were difficult to look upon him as a rival—with his long melancholy face, and dejected countenance. I do not wonder your fair sister would have nothing to say to him, she prefers something more lively, and so do *you*." So saying, Lord de Tracey took his hat and left the room, and Susan was left alone to reflect on the failure of her virtuous attempt which her husband's last words did not give her fresh courage soon to resume.

## CHAPTER VI.

Ti viddi—Ti riconnobbi!  
Ahi Vista! Ani Conosceaza!

A FEW days after this conversation the long-talked-of plan to repair to the Chateau Montmorenci was again resumed, and Lord de Tracey acquainted his wife with his determination to leave Paris the following day for that place, to inspect the progress of improvements and repairs, which he said must be necessarily concluded, ere she could accompany him thither. He promised her to return in a fortnight's time at farthest, bade her divert herself as best she liked; and in a jocular manner warned her against flirting too much with any wo-be-gone looking people like Lord Frederick Ashton.

It was in vain that she endeavored gently to insinuate how happy she should be in any apartment, however small or uncomfortable; and how much she should prefer going with her husband to being alone in that large and public hotel, even for so short a space of time; she dared not press her entreaties, for she saw they were ill received by her husband, and with silent acquiescence; but with regrets which vented themselves, when alone, in bitter tears. She found herself left in that great city, totally unbefriended, without a companion of any kind, save her maid. Many were the sad musings which filled her heart as these lonely days passed by without any other diversion to her mind; but that which she sought in books, and which she could not even obtain from them, as she found her eyes resting on the page, while her thoughts involuntarily reverted sometimes to by-gone days of peace and happiness, now, to those more recent, more complete with trial, now looked forward with more of dread than

hope to those which lay before her.—For some days she abstained from going out to take the air—the necessity of passing through the noisy streets, where the outward bustle of business and pleasure seemed to make her feel more her inward desolation of heart, combined with the fear of meeting any one which might afford an occasion of jealousy or mistrust to her husband, confined her within doors. Four days however after his departure, she received from him a letter so full of kindness, so anxiously expressive of his desire that she should be well and cheerful, that she gladly accepted his entreaty of forgiveness for not having written sooner, saying that he had been so worried by disagreeable business, and in obedience to his desire that she should at least take a little drive every day, she ordered her carriage, and drove to the Bois de Boulogne.—This drive was, in the afternoon, the resort of all the Beau-monde of Paris; but Susan chose expressly an early hour, when none save herself, and here and there an octogenarian, or nursery, or school-troop repaired thither, for the same purpose as herself, to partake the benefit of country air, and here she felt her spirits revive; when alighting from her carriage she walked beneath the shade of the trees, and heard the song of birds and inhaled the freshness of some lingering wild flowers, which still scattered their sweetness where the dust of the road did not extend. Her thoughts reverted to her dear home, and her beloved father and sister seemed as if beside her, bidding her take courage and pursue that path of virtue and self-denial which she had hitherto preserved.

She was about to turn to re-enter her carriage, when a horseman rode quickly towards the place where she was standing.

He slackened his pace as he drew near, and seemed almost arrested as he turned towards her. She looked up—the veil which she wore was partially turned aside, and that moment's glance revealed to her, in the

person of the horseman, Eric Hamilton.—It was but a moment—he passed on, and the increased pace to which he spurred his horse concealed him in a moment from observation, had she been enabled to bestow it; but a mist swam before her eyes.—She felt as in a dream, and, ere she knew what had taken place, she was lifted rather than assisted into the carriage.

Weak and indisposed as she had often been, the servant merely thought her fatigued by her walk, and having closed the door proceeded at once, according to her previous directions, to her hotel—arrived there, what was his astonishment to find his lady in a senseless state.—*Miladi est evanouie*, said he, as he called loudly on the attendants in the hall to assist him in bearing her to her chamber.

Lord Frederick Ashton was at that moment in the act of enquiring after her, and leaving his card with the porter; he instantly offered his aid and carried her to her chamber.

"Miserable wretch!" said she, opening her eyes wildly as she was laid on a sofa. "Where am I? where, where is he? Oh take me from him, take me from myself." Then recovering herself, and beholding Lord Frederick standing beside her, she sighed deeply, and tears came to her relief. "What is this? how is this?"

"You were probably fatigued with your long drive," said Lord Frederick. "I happened to be at the door when your servant found that you were ill, and was glad to be of use. May I hope," added he, gently applying the vinaigrette he held towards her—"May I hope I leave you better?"

"Oh yes—quite well, thank you," said Susan, endeavoring to rise. "I remember all now—thank you—thank you."

Lord Frederick bowed respectfully, then, bidding her maid to remain beside her, he took his leave, and instantly despatched a doctor to Lady de

The words Lord Frederick had heard were now sufficiently explanatory of a suspicion which had ere now crossed his mind, of the unhappiness of poor Susan, and, with that generosity of character for which he was distinguished, he resolved to devote himself to endeavor to reclaim Lord de Tracey from a course of life which he felt persuaded was the cause of it.

With the character of the Contesse de Rambouillet he was well acquainted, and also with the difficulties which had laid Lord de Tracey under such obligations to her; and although the latter had, ever since the day of his becoming acquainted with his wife, treated him with a coldness of manner to him unaccountable, he determined to overlook it for her sake, and endeavor to secure the happiness of *her* sister whose fascinations had so powerfully wrought on the affections of his noble and affectionate heart.

The illness which thus commenced was not one to disappear in an hour, and Susan soon found the benefit of that attendance which Lord Frederick had kindly sent to her. A fever which lasted some days confined her entirely to her chamber, and when she rallied, she was by no means fit to venture again out—as soon as she was able, she wrote to acquaint her husband of her illness; but in this Lord Frederick had forestalled her, not indeed by letter; but when he found her complaint to be of a serious nature, he set off himself for the Chateau Montmorenci, and, no sooner had Susan despatched her letter, than she was pressed in the arms of her husband.

The deepest anxiety and distress were pictured in his countenance, and Susan reproached herself the more for the cause of her illness. Tears choked her utterance whenever she attempted to thank him for his kindness; she longed to tell him all. Yet something restrained her which she felt herself unequal to combat against; and she remained silent. He, too,

was silent; he, too, had something to reveal; one word from each had perhaps rendered them forever happy; that one word was suppressed. Concealment! what a poison art thou to the peace of married life!

The world may call it prudence; the wise in their own esteem may call it proper dignity not to betray their feelings; but for those who have sworn to live together till death shall break the bond, a perfect confidence should reign between them; and they who cannot forgive mutual defects when thus disclosed and repented of should never enter that bond of high and holy union.

Had Susan at this time courageously spoken to her husband of that which, by confining within her own breast, occasioned new and useless pangs to a too sensitive conscience, she had disburdened her mind of a load which she felt to be more oppressive than the most careful of a wife's duty need have done; for already had she received some portion of that reward which the fulfilment of duty fails not to bring with it, in the newly awakened feelings which she had wished long in vain to experience towards her husband. But the want of confidence which he evinced to her, the angry words and unjust suspicions with which he embittered her days when they were together; and the loneliness which he often occasioned by frequent absence were not the means to cause her to forget that which had been the engrossing passion, the sweetest hope of years; and the sudden appearance of Hamilton at a time when her health was impaired by much previous mental suffering, recalled so much that was painfully exciting that Susan might have been forgiven, even by a husband, who had not bestowed upon her all his tenderness to obliterate the memory of the past.

On the other hand, had Lord de Tracey given his wife credit for that perfect readiness to forgive, which it was not only her principle, but her disposition to do; he had prized more fondly the woman who would

at once have overlooked his error in concealing, hitherto, the pecuniary embarrassments under which he labored. A strict attendance to economy might at once have rescued him from the gaming-table, and the thralldom under which he was held by a wicked woman; and those amiable qualities which he really possessed had shone out more brightly and been more fully appreciated by his wife.

But such happiness could not attend the secrecy which both preserved towards each other; and when Susan was again restored to convalescence, she found herself once more musing alone in her sick chamber, while Lord de Tracey was vainly seeking happiness in the guilty excitement of the gaming-table. As soon as Susan was able to hold a pen, she had written to her sister to acquaint her with her having seen Hamilton, for she felt in doing so as if she proved to herself for what cause he still remained to her a subject of interest, and she trusted that the time might come when, as a brother, she might so regard him; but whenever she wished to apprise Lord de Tracey of his being in Paris, and of her having seen him once, the words died away on her lips, and the terror she felt of awakening his jealousy and occasioning one of those bursts of passion to which he so often yielded, deterred her from the attempt, and she left Paris without having summoned courage to make an inquiry which her affection for her sister made her anxious to have effected.

On the day previous to their leaving Paris, Lord de Tracey entered her apartment in high spirits.

"Every one," said he, "is going out of town, since the departure of the Court, and you know the gay season will not commence for two months at least, so we may as well have a cheerful party at the old chateau, or you will die of ennui."

"Not I, dear," said Susan; who grieved to anticipate that which her husband's next words confirmed.

"Oh, but I should, because you know, love, I have not been accustomed to ruralise, and besides, that very amiable friend the Contesse, can't bear being a mere *parti quarré* as you and I, Lord Frederick Ashton and she, would constitute."

"Are *they* going also?" asked Susan, endeavoring to conceal how much she felt hurt that she had been kept hitherto in total ignorance of her future guests.

"Oh yes, did you not know it? I thought I had told you," rejoined Lord de Tracey; "well then, I suppose we must have Dr. Sidney to wait upon you; I fear we have no *belle* for him, except I were to ask Mademoiselle Oliviera, and her old father must come too. That's a bore; but he can play at cards. Then there's Harry Manners, a capital good fellow, and sings delightfully. Old Ranieri, who can carry your footstool, and teach you perspective, and by the by, I hear somebody saw Hamilton the other day in the street; if I can get him, he shall come too."

Susan felt herself grow pale. Now was arrived, she thought, the moment to confess that she also had seen him; but ere she had gathered breath to do so, without betraying any agitation, Lord de Tracey, who had been fixing his eyes on her countenance, in a manner which did not assist her in making the disclosure suddenly turned upon his heel, and, saying he must hasten to make these arrangements, left the room.

"Another time," said Susan, to herself, "*I will* speak; I cannot bear to think of any man with an emotion which I dare not betray to my husband; surely past feelings must now for ever be silenced, and does not this secrecy serve to keep the semblance of them alive?"

Then did she reflect on her regret as to the party which Lord de Tracey had found it necessary to surround them with, at the chateau, and she sighed to think in what close contact she was doomed to dwell with a woman whose character she despised; and



who, without being able to define the real cause, she felt to stand between her own and her husband's domestic peace. "But I will make the best of it," thought she, "and endeavor to be cheerful, and do all he wishes: what a pity that Lord Frederick is to be of the party."

It was a bright autumnal morning when Lord de Tracey and Susan entered the carriage which was to convey them to the chateau Montmorenci, and, as he pressed her hand affectionately, and expressed his tender anxiety that country air might restore her to complete health, Susan returned his kindness with a warmth, which sent conviction to his heart of her innocence, and of attachment to him; and made him inwardly resolve that none should rob him of that affection, though he remembered that the companion whom he sought, more now from imagined necessity than good will, had more than once endeavored to do so.

"We must stop at the Hotel Rambouillet," said he to the servant, after they had proceeded a little way.

"Do talk to her, sweet Susan," said he to his wife, as he again seated himself by her side, "I do not think you know how really charming she can be in conversation; and I am sure she does not understand half your merits."

This was said with so much energy that Susan could not mistake the compliment. "I shall certainly try to shew mine," said she, smiling, "for your sake, but I fear the Contesse will laugh at my French—no one who learns a language from books only can ever catch that *grace spirituelle*, which the very *soubrettes* of Paris so eminently possess, and which adorns the most trivial word they say."

"Yes, but what think you of the *grace touchante*? you know, my charmer, who possesses that."

Since the days of their courtship, Susan had not seen her husband so agreeable—so apparently enamored of all she said and did; and it was with far

different emotions that she now listened to him. It was therefore with a determination to please, and be pleased, that she waited for the Contesse de Rambouillet when the carriage stopped at her door, and still more was she disposed to think, she had hitherto wronged her, when, with hurried steps, she hastened to enter it, and, with an appearance of genuine kindness, congratulated her on her restoration to health, and herself on the happiness of enjoying her society together with Lord de Tracey.

The simplicity with which she was attired—the lively grace of her manner, and the sallies of unexceptionable wit, with which she enlivened Susan in spite of herself—gave a zest to conversation of a graver nature, which the Contesse well knew how to assume, and Susan listened and wondered, and then ceased to be surprised that Lord de Tracey should have found charms in such a woman so far superior to those which her less brilliant wit and tamer imagination could supply. The Contesse managed well, for who can be agreeable when depressed with a consciousness of inferiority in the eyes of one they wish most to please? and perhaps there had been few occasions in which Lord de Tracey had thought more of the Contesse's abilities, and less of those of his wife, than at the very time the latter began most to wish herself valued.

A French writer has said that there is no greater crime than for good people to be dull. Lord de Tracey had read the observation, and he silently thought so. Forgetful of those hours in which he had basked in the sunny presence of that sweet and pure mind, when happy and in health, her spirits unconfined by restraint, her talents elicited by the approving smile of domestic affection, he had admired in her the tempered liveliness of an innocent gaiety, united with the good sense which gave weight to lighter adornments. He now beheld all these qualities restrained by the imperious selfishness of one who wished to lessen her

in his esteem; and, with that egotism of which man is often guilty, he refused to render to one so worthy of it the homage he bestowed willingly on the woman who beguiled the passing hour, for the purpose of gratifying herself, and prosecuting her own mischievous schemes.

When, wearied with the fatigue of the journey, Susan sank back in silence, and leaned her head on the window of the carriage, the Contesse seized the opportunity of introducing the topic on which she intended to work her evil machinations, with the most success, and, as if she had suddenly perceived the cause of Susan's listlessness, she exclaimed, "How dull we all are, really we want Lord Frederick Asthon to enliven us."

"I don't think," rejoined Lord de Tracey, "that he could afford us much help in that way. The very sight of his countenance makes me melancholy; but he is a good fellow, after all."

"O yes," said Susan, smiling on her husband, her thoughts reverting to the respectful kindness he had shewn to her, "so kind!"

"I knew Lady de Tracey would appreciate him," said the Contesse, glad to think she had again awoke that jealousy which she feared was slumbering, "and I assure you, my dear, you ought; he is a great admirer of yours."

Lord de Tracey bit his lip. The Contesse had not spoken in vain; he thought of the anxiety he had betrayed during his wife's illness; of the frequency of his enquiries; of the knowledge he seemed to possess of that which he most wished to conceal; and he wished he had not included him in his invitation. But then the Contesse had pressed him to do so. Susan seemed indifferent about it; all was yet right.

"I wonder," he said, after the momentary reverie which these meditations had occasioned, "I wonder if they will be there before us. Sidney is always in a hurry, and Frederick is as slow."

“Comme s’il allait prendre l’oiseau sur le nid,” said the Contesse, and laughed, and looked, and apologised for so vulgar a proverb.

“Mille pardons, my dear Lady de Tracey; make me a few centuries old, and then forgive me. Then I should be a goth, indeed—now a humble Parisian.”

Susan smiled, and the Contesse’s playful manner made her almost forgive what seemed to her most offensive, that of offering an apology to her for any observation she choose to make on Lord Frederick Ashton. Lord de Tracey thought it strange also, and was again uneasy; but just then, the carriage stopped at the post-house, where they were to change horses for the last time ere they reached the Chateau.

Four jaded-looking beasts stood smoking beneath the indifferent care bestowed on them by a lazy postillion, who seemed more busily occupied in eyeing the silver hé held in one hand than in removing the harness which fell from the other.

“Oh, there they are,” said Lord de Tracey, looking out, and seeing on a distant turn of the road, the wheels of Lord Frederick’s carriage.

“Depêche toi, Jacques,” said the Contesse to the courier, as he stood wrangling with the other post-boys; and the hint was more quickly taken when she spoke; for her bright eyes, and something brighter yet, of which she was known to have plenty, worked wonders on the dilatory postillions. Smack went their whips, and on they flew, through troops of wondering villagers; and, passing by the more tardy wheels of Lord Frederick’s vehicle, they were soon within the precincts of Lord de Tracey’s estate.

He looked at Susan, as she bowed to those in the carriage they passed, and the consciousness that he did so called a blush into her cheek which was triumphantly observed by the Contesse. “This will prosper,” thought she, as they stopped at the entrance

door of the chateau, "in spite of that sweet conjugal smile, with which she rewards that credulous fool."

The Chateau Montmorenci was a large irregular building, situated on the banks of the Aube, in the midst of one of the most smiling scenes of the province of Champagne. The country immediately surrounding it was flat and tame, but so gaily decked with flourishing vineyards and green fields, interspersed with irregular hamlets, plantations, and orchards, that the eye was satisfied with its homely sweetness, and felt scarcely desirous to leave it, for the hills whose blue range partially relieved the monotony of the distant out-line.

The massive walls of the chateau were broken by numerous jutting buttresses, in defiance of correct architectural taste, but yet, relieved as the building stood by a thick clump of fir trees on one side, interspersed with others of lighter growth and foliage, and enlivened by the sparkling waters of the Aube, which laved the foot of one of the projecting parts of the building, the general effect produced on the beholder was that of pleasing cheerfulness; and when, from the window, or from the Pavilion which overspread the terraced garden, neatly trimmed and decked with parterres, of formal but not unpleasing fashion, the bright array of orange and lemon trees were seen unfolding their mingled leaves, fruits, and blossoms to the evening sun; then fancy reverted to the gay and courtly days of Louis Quatorze, when brilliant troops of courtiers and fair dames were seen with their guitars, singing lays of love, and inhaling their fragrance.

"What a charming place this is!" said Susan, to Lord de Tracey, as he kindly took her hand and expressed his hope that the journey had not fatigued her.

"I can scarcely think of that now," replied she, looking in his face with a sweetness which could not be traced in the countenance of the Comtesse de Ram-

bouillet; and which made him at that moment forget her existence.

He seated himself at the large window of the saloon, where Susan had thrown herself on entering, and began to point out to her the names of the different villages and chateaus in the neighborhood; and here they remained for some time, till they perceived the Contesse walking arm in arm, in the garden, with Lord Frederick Ashton, and apparently engaged in close conversation.

"What can the Contesse find so interesting in my friend? so sudden, too, their intimacy!" said Lord de Tracey, biting his lip, and assuming an expression which sent a pang through the heart of Susan.

"I dare say," she replied, "that, could we overhear what they are saying, we should find little to convince us of the mutual interest they take in one another; but you know, dear, the Contesse can throw an air of mystery over the simplest conversation, 'la pluie et le beau temps,' become matters of importance to a French woman, notwithstanding their satire on our country-women for making such matters their favorite topic."

"Yes, Susan," replied Lord de Tracey, withdrawing his hand from hers, "the Contesse *can* make the most indifferent subject a pleasing one, and it is no mean talent, but she can also do justice to higher themes, as you have this day heard."

Susan scarcely enjoyed the warmth with which her husband eulogised the talents of this fair Contesse, whom, spite of herself, she could not like; but, resolving to refrain from the exhibition of an uneasiness she could not altogether overcome, she declared her resolution to go and direct the arrangement of the apartments of her guests, and, so saying, she left her husband, who, joined the Contesse and Lord Frederick, in the garden.

The evening passed off pleasantly. The Contesse sung, if not in best taste, at least with the most perfect

French vivacity, to the guitar, which she touched with effective brilliancy. Dr. Sidney, who was a quiet, middle-aged man, was just the person whom Susan felt herself allowed to converse with, without awakening her husband's jealousy, and he had too much sound good sense, and intrinsic worth, not to please a mind constituted as hers was for the appreciation of excellence in its most modest garb. Lord Frederick *seemed* to devote himself to the Contesse, and she contrived, for she knew how, to appear perfectly polite to him, while her every word, look, and action, was devoted to Lord de Tracey. He was in good humor, and in good spirits, and Susan was happy to observe that he retired, for one evening at least, contented, without the excitement of cards.

## CHAPTER VII.

— the tones of mirth,  
Those silvery tones, that rang through days more bright,  
Have died in others, yet, to me, they come,  
Singing of childhood back—the voices of my home !  
MISS. HEMANS.

NEXT morning, Susan awoke, refreshed by a comfortable sleep, and declared herself already better than she had been during their sojourn in Paris ; but what was her disappointment, when throwing open the shutters of her window, to perceive a thick mist spread over the landscape and garden which looked so bright and sunny on the previous evening, immersed in thick rain which had fallen during the night, and which seemed likely to continue that day. "I wish" said she, inwardly, "that I were fully possessed with that beautiful sentiment which I have heard from the lips of the pious, that 'God's weather must be good weather.' Alas ! in frail humanity, I trust that bodily weakness may occasion the far different sensations which such a day as this inspires ; all seems dark and gloomy ; its very stillness seems portentous ;" but the voice of Lord de Tracey, in his dreams, startled her, from her rêverie.

"I do not love her," said he, "I do not love her—hateful—odious woman, I fear."

Susan was by his side in a moment. "Surely you are not well," said she, as he was awake by the loudness of the voice with which he had spoken, "what troubled you, that you spoke so wildly ?"

"Spoke !" said Lord de Tracey hurriedly, "what did I say ? what—tell me ?"

"Only something of a woman," said Susan, smiling, "whom I hope I did not personify even in your dream, for you said she was odious."



"How very odd," said Lord de Tracey, trying to cough, but the words remained in the mind of Susan, and, strange to say, she was not displeased they had been uttered.

All the party appeared at the breakfast table with the exception of the Contesse. She sent word by her maid that she was *indisposée*, and could not think of rising, "*par un tems pareil*," but requested the attendance of any one who might feel disposed to visit her. Susan did not much regret her absence, but felt rather surprised at the invitation being so general. She was not yet initiated in French manners, and she conceived it to be the mistake of the maid.

By some strange accident, every body was in good spirits at the same time, and the breakfast passed off very agreeably. "There is only one thing I wish for," said Susan, rising, and going towards the window.

"What a fortunate person," said Lord Frederick, following her, "and what is that one thing, if I may venture to ask?"

"Oh, certainly," said Susan smiling; "it is no mystery, only the arrival of the post, and I have just heard that we may expect it soon, or I should not indulge in that very lazy occupation of looking out of the window on such a day as this, for we can see a very little way of the road by which the messenger will arrive."

Scarcely had Susan spoken when she recollected the necessity there would be of sparing Lord Frederick's feelings should she receive those letters which she most anxiously expected; for it was of her sister she wished to hear, and she would fain have changed the subject; but Lord Frederick continued, "I also await the arrival of the post with equal eagerness as yourself; for I am anxiously expecting some intelligence of the dearest, the best friend I have on earth. Oh for the sight of that messenger, so well described by your favorite poet. Do you remember the lines, Lady de Tracey?"

Susan answered in the negative, and Lord Frederick, with an energy she had seldom seen in him, recited the following well-known verses :—

“ He comes ! the Herald of a noisy world,  
 With spatter'd boots, strapp'd waist, and frozen locks,  
 News from all nations lumbering at his back.  
 True to his charge, the close-packed load behind ;  
 Yet careless what he brings, his one concern  
 Is to conduct it to the destin'd inn :  
 And, having dropt th' expected bag, pass on.  
 He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch !  
 Cold, and yet cheerful, messenger of grief,  
 Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some—  
 To him indifferent whether grief or joy.  
 Houses in ashes, and the fall of stocks—  
 Births, deaths and marriages—epistles wet  
 With tears that trickled down the writer's cheeks  
 Fast as the periods from his fluent quill,  
 Or charged with amorous sighs of absent swains,  
 Or nymphs responsive, equally affect  
 His horse and him, unconscious of them all.”

“ That is true painting, at least,” said Susan, “ if not poetry ; and, perhaps, my favorite Cowper is too true in all he says to be poetical, at least, if that observation of Burke's be correct, that there must be something mysterious in all that is sublime ;—but see ! what is this very curious-looking equipage—not, surely your ‘ herald of a noisy world ? ’ Not certainly very sublime, although mysterious enough ; for I cannot imagine such a vehicle to contain living beings.”

“ It seems rather large for the post-bag, too,” said Lord Frederick, laughing ; and, as he spoke, the car, or carriage, or waggon—for it partook of all these, in its composite form, yet could scarcely claim the name of any of them—drew up to the door.

The jingling of the bells round the horses' heads was accompanied by the repeated cracks of the whip, which the driver of this incongruous looking machine sounded proudly as he reached the gate of the chateau ; and having, with much trouble succeeded in extricating his enormous boots from the stirrups, he proceeded, before attempting the aperture of his load, to remove a blue smock-frock which had veiled the

red and silver jacket with which the upper part of his person was adorned. When thus equipped for conquest, he marched towards the hinder part of the two-wheeled car, and struck it repeatedly with the butt end of his whip. The summons was met with very little attention from those within. He then whistled loudly on the sonorous instrument which this useful article contained, and, finding this also ineffectual, began calling loudly in the following terms to the inhabitants of the mysterious carriage, "*Holla ! que faites vous—dormirais vous, jusqu' à demain ? Eveillez vous donc !—nous voici au chateau, Hollà.*"

But neither did these expostulations succeed. He therefore proceeded once more to resume the smock-frock, and had actually remounted his jaded steed, when Lord Frederick opened the window, and, by Lady de Tracey's desire, demanded the names of his passengers, and the cause of so abrupt an arrival and departure.

"*C'est mon maître et ma jeune maîtresse ; et ce vieux lourdaïn le Marquis Ranieri, qui ne veulent pas s'éveiller. Je vais retourner d'où nous venons.*"

A few words of expostulation, however, were sufficient to dissuade this impatient driver from his intention, and Lady de Tracey, having despatched her servants to make more effectual calls on the sleeping travellers, soon, with much amusement, beheld them dislodge from their encasement, a bundle of straw having first been ejected from the aperture, which served as a door. A large violoncello was next handed out, and at length, after many loud yawns and exclamations of distress at the damp of the day, which a very sleepy voice declared would bring on a fit of rheumatism, the head of an aged gentleman, enveloped in a scarlet night-cap, was first protruded, and was followed by the rest of his person, well wrapped up in knitted overalls, and a thick black duffle cloak. Next followed another gentleman, of somewhat less advanced age,

whose head was scarcely discernible through the dense volumes of smoke which he emitted from a cigar he held in his mouth, and which, from the moment of awaking, he had ignited, lest he should lose a moment of his favorite pastime.

"*Je suffoque*," said the sweet voice of a young woman, as she next jumped out of this receptacle of unpleasant effluvia, and Susan had little pains in sympathizing with her distress. In a few moments the party were introduced into the drawing-room, by the names of Monsieur and Mademoiselle Olivier and le Marquis Ranieri.

Susan then recollected having met these persons at the house of the Contesse de Rambouillet, although the difference of their appearance in their travelling toilet had hitherto prevented her recognizing them. She remembered also that Lord de Tracey had intimated his intention of inviting them to the chateau, although she scarcely expected their arrival so soon. With that innate good breeding for which she was remarkable, she received her guests so as to place them immediately at their ease, although bashfulness certainly seemed to form no part of their frailties; and, in a moment, Monsieur Olivier was pouring forth with French volubility the history of their travelling adventures, and Mademoiselle Olivier appeared by no means displeased with the auditor she had chosen for the complaint of her inconveniences in the person of Lord Frederick, to whom she complained, in no measured terms, of the smoking propensities of their Italian friend.

The old Marchese Ranieri devoted himself at once to Susan, whom he favored alternately with fulsome compliments, and the most minute details of the state of his health, and the necessity he was under of keeping himself warm in the damp climate of France. Susan could have better borne this had her new guest refrained from a custom to which she had not yet be-

come habituated, from her slender intercourse with foreigners. She was glad to escape from his eloquence to acquaint Lord de Tracey with the arrival of his expected guests. She was much surprised, on knocking at the door of the Contesse de Rambouillet and being desired to enter, to find the latter sitting up in bed, her head decorated with a profusion of lace and ribbon, her face more highly rouged than usual, and with drapery-coquettishly disposed about her person, while she listened to the conversation of Lord de Tracey, who sat on a fauteuil beside her.

Susan was astonished to find her husband thus admitted to the privacy of a lady's sleeping chamber, and the message the Contesse had sent in the morning was now explained. Her astonishment was however betrayed by her countenance, and the almost instinctive inclination she felt to withdraw which the Contesse failed not to perceive.

"*Entre, ma chère,*" said she, with a condescension which Susan could have excused: "you do not yet know our French manners; this is the custom of our country, and one I hope which may not shock you."

Susan was silent. She did not wish to have her prejudices so easily removed, though she wished herself absent. The word of her husband however was sufficient to detain her, and, having politely enquired after the health of the Contesse, and made known to Lord de Tracey on the arrival of their new guests, she hastened from the apartment as soon as she could, and hurried on to her own room, there to ponder over the influence which such a woman as the Contesse de Rambouillet appeared to have gained over the mind of her husband, and to lament that necessity which had called them, so soon after their marriage, to a country where outward customs, to say the least, appeared to her so little favorable to the cultivation of morality and domestic happiness.

She sighed, as the remembrance of her early years recurred to her pure and innocent mind, and prayed that the time might soon arrive when she might return to the home of her youth, and perhaps restore, while it was yet time, to the mind of her husband, that sense of dignity and decorum which is one of the safe-guards of the domestic peace of English firesides.

There is a blame attached to that man who occasions the yearnings of a pure and innocent heart, even for a father's home, when he has sworn to make his own the centre of her hopes and desires; he is not satisfied himself, if he has ever loved the being whom he thus devotes to regrets to which she might, but for his conduct, have remained a stranger, and, if in his heart there remains one sentiment of true and kindly feeling, he is treasuring up for himself many an hour of unavailing sorrow and bitter repentance. It is not only the remembrance of crime, or transient deviations from the paths of virtue and morality, which haunt the silent and contemplative hour with bitterness; but sins of omission towards those to whom we are bound for ever will also give remorse. The slighting word or look with which we have wounded the silent but sensitive heart; the want of sympathy in moments of sorrow, or of gladness, with which we had power to soothe the one and brighten the other, but which we have neglected to offer, will seem to an awakened mind as a dereliction from duty, when the hour of conviction arrives, and leave a pang for which no future care can afford any adequate indemnification; since conscience will speak, though the voice of reproach should never be heard from another.

It was not, certainly, from the gentle voice of his wife that Lord de Tracey was likely to hear the history of that which might be read in her pale cheek and sunken eye; but there were moments when, left to himself, he would have ceased to damp the dawnings of an affection which he should have prized too

dearly to forfeit by neglect, or impair by groundless suspicions; but from the moment he perceived that he could not persuade Susan to regard the Contesse de Rambouillet in that light in which he wished her to appear in the eyes of his wife, he ceased to render to her that devotion which her virtues and her charms, independent of her connexion with himself, deserved, and had once obtained; and not only had she, day after day, the pain of experiencing his neglect and unkindness; but she saw those attentions which she might have claimed, as her right, lavished on a woman whose principles, and whose dispositions, no outward gloss of manner could conceal from her to be utterly inimical to virtue.

The society of Monsieur and Mademoiselle Olivier had been evidently sought for the purpose of ministering to the entertainment of the Contesse. The former was ever ready to sit down to the card table, and attend her in her walks round the garden, or hand her books and writing materials, when she lay in bed of a morning, which was her frequent custom. In Mademoiselle Olivier, Susan could find little to interest her. She was, according to the full acceptance of the vulgar term, the toady of the Contesse—on the watch to warn her of the approach of one not wanted, when engaged in a tête-à-tête—to give the word of praise at the conclusion of some of her bon-mots;—or to write letters to her marchande de modes, or cut the leaves of her magazin des Dames—or seem to be the person called for, when some phrase was uttered to another which Susan was not intended to overhear. The sentiment with which Lord Frederick had inspired this frivolous and deceitful girl served however, more and more, to open his eyes to the character of a woman whom he had long suspected, and whom he determined, if possible, to separate from a family whose happiness she was daily striving to frustrate. The old Mrs. Ranieri had been evidently invited for no

other purpose than to serve as a buffoon to the party, and this intention the poor old man sufficiently answered. He filled up the intervals of conversation with recitations of Metastasio and Alfieri—voluntaries on the violoncello, and exhibitions of sundry legerdemain tricks, which he was glad to display, for the sake of so comfortable a locale as the chateau, even at the expense of his dignity. But Susan found in him something of that natural taste—if such there exist, which is so often met with in Italians, whose minds have not been cultivated by more solid instructions than the lighter literature of their native country; and though when she had in a measure conquered her disgust of his excessive love of tobacco, and the practices to which such a predilection led, she still could not refrain from smiling when, after the recitation of passages from the most beautiful poets, he spat upon the floor, and then ejaculated “Ecco il vero sublime!” Still did she derive more pleasure from the ebullitions of his harmless fancy than from the more refined, but more dangerous and deceitful, intercourse with many of those who formed the society in which she lived.

There was another person who had joined their party soon after the arrival of the Oliviers, who seemed greatly to add to the enjoyment of the Marchese Ranieri, as he said he regarded him as a perfect specimen of an English gentleman, and who, if regarded by others with as much complacency as by himself, might have been a perfect specimen of any country; but the tastes for which he was distinguished were not likely to augment the pleasure of Susan, when in his society, nor could she esteem the judgment of her old protégé in deeming him *il vero Inglese*, as he did. In fact, Lord de Tracey, whose manners were genuinely good, and whose judgment, when not perverted by any false excitement, was correct, could not have relished the society of so vulgar a man, had he not had other motives for seeking it than those of personal gratification.



It was then for the first time that he really seemed to perceive her altered appearance, and the dread of losing her flashed across his mind with a fearful power.

"Is it long," said he, "since you have felt this pain in your chest? Frederick spoke to me of your cough, but I really did not think it so bad then. However," added he, turning away, "he is so very attentive that my observations would be quite useless."

"He is attentive," said Susan, while a blush of mortification for a moment dyed her cheek; "but his attention could scarcely supply the place of others which"—

She paused, and the unwilling tear rolled down her cheek. Lord de Tracey caught her in his arms.

"And is it indeed so? and have you not received them, my dear—my gentle Susan? But no," continued he, relinquishing his grasp, as if ashamed of a tenderness thus extorted, "I will not be deceived thus—I have seen, I have heard that which I might have once been blind to, but now it is impossible;—you shall, however, be taken to the climate *his* physician recommends, however inconvenient such a journey may be to me at this time."

"Stay, I beg of you!" said Susan, with a firmness which her husband's injustice lent to her manner, but a moment since softened by his transient kindness—"stay and hear me," said she, as Lord de Tracey was preparing to leave the room. "I cannot suspect you of being the author of such suspicions as you have this moment insinuated, but whoever lays claim to the merit of so base a falsehood must bear the odium of destroying an innocent woman's peace and happiness; but do not, I entreat you, undertake a journey inconvenient or unpleasant to yourself for my sake; let me consult another physician than Dr. Sidney, and perhaps he may decide on something else, which may spare you a trouble which I should be grieved to occasion for so worthless a life."

This conversation ended with a return of gentleness in Lord de Tracey's manner, which was scarcely sufficient again to soften his unhappy wife to a tenderness which she could not feel, while respect no longer hallowed the feeling she entertained for her husband.

There was something on his mind which evidently occasioned a conduct which his natural kindness of heart could not have led her to suspect as possible to be exhibited by him, and it was not till after the expiration of some days, and a lengthened conversation with the Contesse de Rambouillet, that the projected journey was at length determined on, although with such conditions as could not render the prospect of it very pleasing to poor Susan. The Contesse was to be of the party. She had, she said, long intended to re-visit Italy, and could not do so more agreeably than in the society of such dear friends.

The party at the chateau accordingly broke up, and Monsieur et Mademoiselle Olivier departed, the one shedding tears for the loss of more love than he had reckoned on—the other for the failure of the power of her charms over the heart of Lord Frederick. She however consoled herself with the prospect of Mr. Manners' company, who had promised to visit her father early the next week. Old Ranieri threw himself at Susan's knees, and shouted out with ludicrous despair—

*"Ecco quel fiero istante,  
Nice—mia nice addio!"*

Then, shouldering his violoncello, and lighting his cigar, he once more entered the dark covering of Monsieur Olivier's vehicle, and drove off.

Lord Frederick took the road to Paris, and hoped to meet his friends, in about a month, at Florence or Pisa. He left his friends with a regret, heightened by the knowledge of their unhappiness, but with a proud consciousness of deserving that regard which his generous and highly principled conduct merited,

and which he trusted would one day be rewarded, by seeing two beings, for whom he entertained a real friendship, as happy in their union as he ardently desired.

"Read this," said he, to Susan, as he bade her adieu, and placed a letter with an English post-mark in her hand; "it contains intelligence of one in whom we are mutually interested—in whom I trust you may one day be more so than you are even now, for I know not a living being who better deserves that happiness which I vainly sought at a time when I was ignorant of his wishes, but which I now second with as much earnestness as human nature will admit of."

Lord Frederick spoke hurriedly, and his face was blanched with strong emotion, but the cause of this was soon explained, when Susan read in Evelyn's letter (for it was from this friend of her early years) the explanation of words which, till she did so, appeared mysterious, if not incomprehensible.

## CHAPTER VIII.

" Oh ! gently close the eye  
That loved to look on you ;  
Oh ! seal the lip whose earliest sigh,  
Whose latest breath, was true."

OLD SONG.

**THERE** is in every reflective mind a disposition to retrace, in meditative hours, the path by which we have been led, whether we look upon our guidance as that of blind chance, or the unerring hand of Divine Providence.

Those who refer all events, and even the bias which their minds received towards the agency of that which some would proudly deem the effect of their own wills, to this all-disposing power, will ever be calmed under the recollection of past griefs, or future trials, with a sense of dependance, pleasing to the humble and the good, and which, far from lulling them into the dangerous sleep of fatalism, will arm them to higher exertions in duty, with a consciousness that they have not combatted, nor will in future contend with, these, unaided or alone.

It was with such a view that Evelyn awaited beneath the roof of Mr. Somerville the day which was to witness his union with his amiable and lovely daughter ; and it was under a deep sense of such guidance that he trusted to be enabled to fulfil towards her those duties which he had imposed on himself when, in an hour of disappointment and despair of ever obtaining that happiness which had been the hope of his early years, he had cast his future fate in the hands of one by whom he saw himself to be deeply beloved, and the warmth of whose affection he now returned with a regard which the excellence of her disposition warranted, but which could not claim that magic name

which sheds so bright a halo round earthly affections, brighter than aught beside which irradiates the path of life, and which Gilbert thought had arisen once, and was for ever set to him.

It was under this impression that he strove to forget the memory of past days, and of past hopes; and to cherish with gratitude the tenderness by which he felt himself to be beloved by the amiable girl who was so soon to become his wife.

If there were moments (and these would recur in spite of himself,) when he accused himself of rashness, in having wilfully deprived himself of the last ray of hope which might remain for him, while Margaret was still unmarried, and in which he thought he had imposed on himself a task which he could scarcely fulfil, as the future partner of all his cares deserved, he was again and again persuaded that, in acting as he had done, he had secured the happiness of two amiable beings, when he met the serene smile of parental love from his aged friend, and the tear of grateful joy with which Caroline repaid his every attention; and sometimes when gazing on her bright and beautiful eye, and the rosy flush which tinged her lily cheek, as she spoke of the more than happiness which kind Heaven had blest her with in his affection, he almost doubted whether, in the fondness of such a being, he ought not to feel amply rewarded for the bitterest trial he had undergone. Whatever might occur, he was resolved to devote his life to ensure to her that happiness to which she looked forward with such bright anticipations, and the endeavor had been less severe but for a circumstance which for some time rendered this a task of no small difficulty.

The day of their intended marriage was fixed, and Caroline, whose health seemed every hour to improve—no longer now confined to the house, resumed her wonted occupations, while Evelyn was the companion of her walks and of her charitable visits. He could

not but admire the meek and endearing piety of that soul enshrined in so fair a casket. Wherever she directed her steps—whether to the cottages of the aged and the sick, or to the school where ignorance withdrew under the influence of her patient instructions, she was received by the welcomes and the blessings of young and old; while he partook of that good will, which he shared as being about to be so nearly connected with her, he felt constrained to deserve it as she did; then, how could he doubt the fulfilment of the reward?

One day, having parted with Caroline, at the door of a cottage where a sick woman wished her attendance alone, he loitered about the village, awaiting her. The mail was at that moment changing horses, opposite the little inn which stood at its entrance; and, although he did not feel particularly anxious to receive letters on that day, he entered the post-office, and inquired whether there were any for himself or Mr. Sommerville? "Please to wait a moment," said the good woman, who in all the importance of assorting the contents of a London post-bag, stood puffing behind the counter, round which many anxious faces were watching her movements, and awaiting her distribution.

"Only one for you, my Lord—two and ninepence; that's a dear letter, but I dare say your Lordship won't mind that." Evelyn seized the letter, for in a moment he recognised the hand-writing to be that of Hamilton. It was dated from a village on the confines of Italy, and he felt, he scarcely knew why, a sudden giddiness come over him as he hastily glanced at the signature, to assure himself that he was right in his conjecture.

"Bless me, your Lordship is surely not well," said the good woman of the shop, advancing towards him. "Bless my heart, what will the sweet young lady do, should you be ill—no bad news, my Lord, I hope?"

"Oh! no, no," said Lord Ormiston, endeavoring to release himself from observation; but he was over-

come, and, requesting to be left alone, he was ushered into the little chamber at the back of the shop, where he read the following letter :—

“ My dear Ormiston,

“ Ever since I left England I have accused myself of seeming dissimulation, in not having sooner opened your eyes to that misapprehension in your mind, regarding the state of my feelings ; and which was the occasion of your too generous kindness—a kindness of which, though I feel myself unworthy, I trust I shall never be ungrateful. You have indeed done much towards raising my views of human nature. I am tired of the world, but, I thank heaven, there is at least one man living who could redeem my opinion of it, and perhaps it is my own fault that I know not another.

“ How shall I write of that which parches my vitals to think of? How shall I explain to living ears that which I cannot think of even in my solitary despair? But it is due to you that I should do so, and when a life of sin and misery draws to that wretched end whose approach I long for, I shall, at least, have this consolation, that I have not been the curse to one such as you are, which I must now appear.

“ If that which I have heard be true—if Margaret could indeed once blindly prefer a wretched being like myself to a man of blameless, nay of exalted character, such as yours, or had once, with girlish fancy, imagined the passionate adoration, which seemed the very life of my soul, to be devoted to her, she must ere now have recognised her error, and, with tears of sorrowful regret, lament the transient infatuation which could induce her to slight an affection of which the proudest of her sex must be prouder still.

“ God grant that these regrets may be cheered by brighter hopes. God grant that you may receive,

in the undivided love of that sweet and innocent heart, the reward of so much high and honorable worth.

“ I think that my seared and withered existence might still be enlivened by one ray of enjoyment, did I hear of your happiness, although I am now a hopeless wanderer on the face of the earth, without one being whom I dare to love. She who was the sun of my life—the spring and centre of my now blighted hopes—she whom I loved with all the passionate ardor of which man is capable, is the wife of another.—I have seen her as such—but oh ! how changed. I could not speak to her—I maddened with the sight, and when in my delirium I raved of that which I dared not, I was too proud, to breathe in moments of self-possession ; the voice of a demon whispered in my ear—‘ She loved me also.’—Can it indeed be ?—I cannot write of this.

“ May Heaven’s best blessing descend upon you, if the prayer of such a being as myself do not rather bring a curse than a blessing. You are worthy of purer, holier prayers than mine : may they be heard !

Yours gratefully and truly,  
J. HAMILTON.”

The tumult of feeling which this letter excited scarcely enabled Gilbert for some moments to realise the nature of his present situation. Under the influence of strong excitement, how does fancy observe, with her multiplied images, those realities which but an instant before stood before the mind with almost tangible perspicuity. A flood of delirious hopes rushed before him, as he now remembered what Hamilton had seemed once before darkly to intimate, but which he had then regarded as the infatuation of his own wishes. He had then been deceived, Susan had been—alas ! still was, the object of this unfortunate man’s passion, and she who had, with her own I



confessed to him her attachment to another, loved without return !

She, for whom he would have given his life, for the sake of whose wished-for happiness he would have sacrificed all he had, whose gentle compassion he would not even claim, lest it should cast a shade over that path he wished to be so bright, was as wretched as himself ! In the thought of that tenderest of sympathies he indulged for a moment. He felt relief in the tears which her sorrow brought to his eyes, and then, with a bitterness which he had long trusted he should never feel again, his mind reverted to the fate of which he had wove the tissue for himself ; and he almost resolved to disclose what now remained to be told to Caroline, and absolve himself from an engagement which he could not fulfil.

But better thoughts succeeded, and with the return of sober reflection his mind assumed a calmer tone. He remembered too that he had promised to return for her to the cottage, and the time was long past.

He was preparing to leave the room where he had been seated, when the door opened, and Caroline entered. Her face was flushed unwontedly, and as if scarcely able to breathe the words, she hastily whispered, " what has happened, Gilbert—you are ill !" then tears came to her relief, and she sank into his arms.

At that sight Evelyn felt his emotion to be almost as powerful as her own. How could he bear to wound so tender, so devoted a heart as hers ? It was impossible, and he resolved that, come what might of his determination, he should conceal every thing from her which could for a moment disturb her peace of mind, and devote himself entirely to secure her future happiness.

He told her that the misfortunes of an old friend of his, the accounts of which he had just received, had much troubled him ; but that it was now past ; and,

blaming the rashness of the good woman of the house, who had thus alarmed her by summoning her presence at that moment, he placed her arm within his, and walked homewards. The smile soon returned to her cheek, and, though she often cast an inquiring eye to his countenance, where she traced signs of past emotion, yet he succeeded for the time in silencing any latent fear of more painful occasion for it than that which he had explained, and she was again the happiest of the happy.

It was not in vain that Evelyn sought in his solitary hours that calmness which is necessary to survey and appreciate the worth of human purposes. He sought and found it, in the exercise of duty, aided by religious principle, and, if difficulty attended his determination, he knew that at least he was guided by honest and honorable intention.

On the day that preceded that of his projected marriage, the villagers had made a rural feast, beneath the shade of a neighboring wood, which skirted the banks of the stream which flowed through that smiling country. Mr. Somerville and Lord Ormiston with his bride, had promised to preside, and in a small boat decorated with flowers, which these kind-hearted and simple people had gathered from their gardens, they were rowed to the spot destined for the rural feast, where the village children were assembled, each holding a wreath of flowers, and singing these simple words, to a tune which Caroline had taught them :—

“ Our morning prayer to Heaven is flown,  
To which you point the way ;  
To call a special blessing down  
Upon your nuptial day.—

And still to both may years he crown’d  
With undivided bliss,  
And every future day he found  
As rich in joy as this !”

Beneath a wide spreading beech was laid the simple repast which those kind and loving people had pro-

confessed to him her attachment to another without return!

She, for whom he would have given his life, for the sake of whose wished-for happiness he sacrificed all he had, whose gentle company would not even claim, lest it should cast that path he wished to be so bright, was as himself! In the thought of that tenderness he indulged for a moment. He saw the tears which her sorrow brought to her eyes, then, with a bitterness which he had should never feel again, his mind revolved of which he had wove the tissue for almost resolved to disclose what he had told to Caroline, and absolve himself of the promise which he could not fulfil.

But better thoughts succeeded of sober reflection his mind as he remembered too that he had promised for her to the cottage, and that

He was preparing to leave her. He had been seated, when the door opened. Her face was flushed, scarcely able to breathe the fresh air. "What has happened?" then tears came to her eyes.

At that sight Evelyn felt as powerful as her own weakness, so tender, so devoted, impossible, and he resolved. His determination, he showed her which could for a moment, and devote himself to her happiness.

He told her that the most perfect quiet was his, the accounts of which much troubled him

only

reared at  
hectic hue  
that, spite of  
more and more  
the earnest de-  
and as well as she

in the river's brink to  
red to bed, but not to

she broke a blood vessel;  
already dead. The doc-  
for, and, after the applica-  
she was pronounced out of  
but the most perfect quiet was  
dead of that ceremony to which  
and with so much joy on the mor-

row, which was to unite her for life to the man she loved, she lay almost lifeless on her couch—unable to speak; but pressed silently the hands of Evelyn and her father, who watched unceasingly beside her.

Those only who have ministered to the sick and dying, can be aware of the influence they possess to soothe and support the departing soul. Pride can find no resting-place in the mind of one who beholds the ravages of sickness on that nature of which he is alike partaker; and while the eye watches the sinking of life itself, beneath that overwhelming hand which will so soon level all distinctions of intellectual capacity or of outward beauty, the heart can alone speak. At the sight of a youthful being withering in its hour of prime, and compelled to abandon every earthly joy, when they have scarcely awoke into existence, what lessons are taught, then, of the vanity of all earthly possessions, and what heartfelt prayers, such as were never prayed before, are offered up, then, to heaven!

Poor Evelyn found it no easy task to control the emotion which the sight of a father's agony occasioned in a heart like his; and whenever he felt himself released from attending the declining hours of Caroline, it was only to partake more largely of painful sympathy in witnessing the struggle in that good old man's heart, between a sense of resignation to Divine appointment, and the convulsive anguish of a parent's wretchedness.

The trial, however, though severe, was not destined to be of long duration; and, in little more than a week from the day of her illness, she breathed her last in the arms of her father.

The faith, which had guided the short but tranquil current of her earthly life, brightened more at its early close; and, expressing, in the weak, but clearly spoken, accents of her dying voice, the brightness of her anticipations, and recommending the care of her beloved father to one as dear, her innocent soul departed.

It were in vain to paint the agony which rent the heart of poor Mr. Somerville. The loss he had sustained might be surmised by the universal sympathy of grief which was witnessed in all around, and above all, in the constant, though silent, attendance of his dear young friend, who would not leave him—and whose disinterested and tender nature forgot for a while every selfish consideration, and lived but for the consolation of others. The image of his former affection seemed for the time to fade entirely from his view, and he often felt willing to depart to those realms whither he had watched the departure of one so young—so lately full of hope and happiness.

There are few indeed, so hardened as to resist entirely the influence which such solemn and melancholy scenes inspire, and who do not, when they are still recent, so feel the valuelessness of mere earthly enjoyment as to be willing to resign it for more permanent bliss. In after years, when the world once more regains its ascendancy, and when, with all the vigour of its returning interests, we feel proportionately rebellious against its disappointments, how do we recognise the ignorance and deceitfulness of our own hearts, and sigh for those feelings of resignation with which we had once been, or imagined ourselves to be, so familiar and so secure!

There was something inexpressibly touching to Evelyn, when on the first sabbath after the funeral of his only child, Mr. Somerville repaired as usual to the pulpit of his quiet church. He ascended it with a slow but firm step, and, burying his face in his hands, remained sometime in prayer. The congregation had assembled earlier than the usual hour, and the slightest movement would have been heard in the universal stillness that pervaded the congregation, when the clerk, with tremulous voice, gave out the morning hymn. It was then that those sweet strains were missed which a father's ear most loved to listen

to, and through the broken voices of the children might be heard the stifled sob, whilst those more able to repress their feelings dared not trust themselves to join in the holy strains.

Surely, if ever true repentance and virtuous purposes of amendment be formed in the hour of deep and tender sorrow, there were such to be found that day in the hearts of many who listened to the friendly exhortations of one regarded as a parent, and who wept with him for her who spoke, as from the grave, to follow in her steps.

Had Margaret loved the amiable being who once lived but for her affection, as he had loved her, she could not have been displeased that on that day Caroline's image was reflected in his heart.

It was not till some weeks had elapsed, since the death of his intended bride, that Evelyn found leisure or inclination to write the intelligence of this event to his friend General Falkland. He could scarcely define his unwillingness to do so, but so it was; and, when he despatched the letter which contained the sad tidings, he remembered that it was the first time he had written, without expressing one word of remembrance or of enquiry to her of whom he had hitherto ever spoken with that interest which she could not but inspire, and which he had lately forced himself to express as freely, and with as little seeming constraint of manner, as he trusted he might one day entirely feel.

## CHAPTER IX.

"Quel trouble!  
Quels transports!  
Je suis auprès de toi."

● LA VESTALE.

WHEN Susan, by the advice of her physicians, left the Chateau de Montmorenci on her way to the more genial climate of Italy, the autumnal season was already yielding to the chilly advance of winter, and though little able for the fatigue of so long a journey, she felt as if this project were the only one which could rescue her from the complaint which already threatened to settle on her lungs. Every one is aware of the fatal effects of mental disquietude to one whose constitution is consumptive; and Susan, though silent on this subject towards her husband, knew enough of the nature of her disease to remind her how imperative a duty now devolved on her, to endeavor to keep her mind in peace, in order to promote the restoration of her bodily health.

This task was indeed one of difficulty. For the companion, whom Lord de Tracey had selected for their journey, was one whom she could no longer regard with doubt, as an intriguing and wicked woman. Several facts, respecting the conduct of this person, had reached her ears from quarters which she could not hesitate in giving credit to; and were seconded by the close observation which a daily intercourse of some months had enabled her to make, not without a degree of pain, which those only can appreciate who know how grievous it is to a generous mind to judge unfavorably of others, and which, in that of Susan, was increased by the conviction that the baneful energies of evil were placed in the hands of one who had alike skill and talent to exert them to the prejudice of him

whose interests were so closely interwoven with her own, as those of a husband.

Strange it is, how ill can any woman brook to regard the person united to herself by these ties become a prey to the insidious machinations of another, even though neither principle nor affection actuate her own conduct towards her husband. In these, the dislike may be attributed to the combined effects of pride and jealousy—those demons which inhabit even the gentlest of womankind; but in those who are actuated by higher principles, the regard and the responsibility, which so solemn a tie involve on a wife, awake a dread which may well be deemed a holy dread of seeing the being who has sworn devotion of heart and life to one ensnared into the devious paths of error, and departure from truth and virtue, by one of her own sex.

Such a dread did Susan daily experience, though she felt a secret consciousness that the heart of Lord de Tracey was all the while in her own keeping, nor could she refrain from blaming herself as the original cause of her every anxiety, by having so far departed from moral rectitude as to give her hand to one whom she did not love as a wife should love.

This internal self-reproach, which mingled with every regret she experienced, while beholding the degree of influence which the Contesse de Rambouillet exerted over her husband lent fresh vigor to her resolutions, to give him, at least, no outward cause of offence, either by her temper or conduct. She continued, in spite of her bodily weakness, which often rendered each mental effort more painful to conceal the jealousy which might have irritated or provoked him. She made her husband ever her first and sole object, and conducted herself towards the Contesse de Rambouillet with gentleness and perfect courtesy: though with that reserve which could not compromise that sense of her disapprobation of that person which she wished not to conceal.



But who does not know the difficulty of acting a part, even though that part should unfold the fairest testimony of high and honest principle, when the affections travel not in unison with those who cannot enact it? It is a sad trial to one whose life is but the history of the heart, and where a woman is unfortunate enough to have embarked her happiness without the breath of love to swell the sail, she needs more than an ordinary portion of higher aid to steer her course to safety and contentment.

But Susan did possess such aid, and while she could not repress the sigh whilst journeying through lands which nature and art alike combined to beautify, and while entering on that classic ground which she would have so enjoyed to explore, under more pleasing circumstances, she deeply lamented the unknown infatuation which misled her husband in having consented to impair the happiness of both, by adding to their society that of a person whose talents were never employed in the appreciation of the Creator's works, or of man's noblest endowments, but engaged in the mean science of intrigue and selfishness, which became daily more and more her aversion and contempt.

The mind of Lord de Tracey was one of much real refinement, and whenever the scenes through which they passed on entering the confines of Italy gave occasion for the exhibition of his love and appreciation of the sublime and beautiful, Susan could not withhold her admiration of that enriched memory and vivid imagination which so enhance the pleasure of those who are companions in travelling through this interesting and classic country. She wondered how one so apparently formed for all that was dignified and ennobling to the enjoyment of such a mind could partake so largely of a degrading pursuit which was invariably followed in company with the Contesse de Rambouillet, when they tarried for a few days at any of those larger towns which arrest the traveller on his way

southward, and she remembered, with an anguish which the memory of Hamilton seldom failed to create, that the same vices which wasted his fortunes, and embittered his prospects, were those also of her wedded husband.

At Milan, Parma, Piacenza, Bologna, scenes occurred to convince her, more firmly than ever, that the hold which the Contesse possessed over his mind was wholly founded on his unfortunate passion for the gaming table. Not among the learned, the literary, or the refined of these cities did he spend those hours, during which she was left to ruminate alone on her sickness and sorrow. The companions of these hours, when they did appear in her presence, talked mysteriously of gains and losses which they proposed returning to at another period, and gave evidence, by the pernicious interest which they took in past occupations, how little was left for her to hope for the future. Still did she hope, still did she resolve, by gentle and virtuous constraint to reclaim her husband to think and to feel as she was persuaded he would do in time; and putting her trust in Him whose will can alone be heard in the still small voice which he bestows on the inward monitor, she continued her journey, constant in purpose, though sad in heart, towards the romantic Vale of Arno.

The day wore on which found the travellers still among the alternately wild and savage rocks, and smiling villages and pastures of that chain of the Appennines through which the road winds, ere the eye beholds *la bella Fireage* or the plain, and Susan, more fatigued than was her wont, entreated her husband to stop, for that evening, at the little hamlet, if such two desolate looking houses may be termed, which bears the name of Corigliago, and where it was intended merely to change horses.

The Contesse affected a compassionate interest in her weak situation, and joined her entreaties to those

of Lady de Tracey, to which her husband had objected, although she said Forsyth was in the hands of every traveller, and she suspected that the interior of that unsightly dwelling would combine with its exterior, in proving how truly it was fit for nothing but the abode of wretched Vethurini travellers, who knew nothing of the murderous associations of that dreary place. In fact, Susan herself, though less timorous than the bold looking woman who spoke, half shuddered as the recollection of tale of crime and murder recurred to her memory; and she acknowledged that the present appearance of the wretched hotel promised little of comfortable accommodation. "See, however," said she, "some have ventured to take up their abode here for the night; for there is a Vethica, with its sleepy looking Jehu beside it, and a caterche, which bears a somewhat more respectable appearance."

So saying, Lord de Tracey, who had been enquiring as to the number of vacant apartments, handed her and the Contesse from the carriage, and they proceeded up a ricketty stair-case to a long passage, the walls of which opened into a number of sleeping apartments, not remarkable for their cleanliness or commodiousness, but in which Susan was glad to find a momentary repose from the rumbling of the carriage, and the still more unpleasant sound of the Contesse's endless *babillage*.

The long corridor, which was only defended from the sharp air of the mountains by a somewhat dilapidated roof, and an open wooden balustrade, was the only part of the inn which was not occupied by beds, and that therefore usually assigned as the eating place for travellers. A long table was spread with plates, knives, and forks, for an apparently large number of lodgers; and Lord de Tracey gave orders for three additional covers being laid, whilst he wandered out on the hill, preferring the cold air of evening to the damp unpleasant vapours which met the senses within.

Darkness had set in before dinner was served; for, in Italy, almost the first observation which the traveller makes is the absence of that indefinite light which, in colder regions, has so many charms in its lengthened and gradual approach, and which so many enjoy as the interval of rest from labor of thought or action. Here the lover may pass abruptly from his day dreams whether of hope or of despair, to the sudden transition of death-like darkness, or sublime moonlight. Here the laborer; if there be any such in that land of idleness, may sink at once into the sweet sleep of the laboring man; or they who love the hour of pleasure and of dissipation, which revels most at night, may seek it as freely at evening as at the midnight hour; and here, while the northern foreigner repairs to his customary meal of dinner, at seven, as by his own fire-side, for the English customs are like those of the Medes and Persians, unchangeable; he will sit down with foreigners to their cena, or supper, by other light than that which heaven affords.


The party at the little inn were assembled when Lord and Lady de Tracey took their places, beneath the sombre influence of a solitary iron lamp, suspended in the middle of the corridor, at the table spread for all beneath its roof. There were Florentine merchants with their night-caps and their cigars, temporarily laid aside, while they commenced the important business of the evening. There sat a fat Englishman, with his wife and daughter, newly arrived from a Kensington boarding-school, with all the prejudices that could not so soon be laid aside, grumbling at the slow pace of the Vetturina horses, and the filthy accommodation of an Italian inn. There sat a German painter, with his plaited tunic, and his picturesque furred cap, looking like some of Vandyke's mysterious portraits in the shadowy light; and there—but there, for it was opposite to the place where Susan had seated herself on entering—there alone she did not cast her eyes. The person

the one opposite to her was enveloped in a dark travelling cloak, for the evening was cold, and leaned against the chair which supported him, as if unconcerned at what was passing. She saw the outline of a man's figure, but no more, and was occupied in declining the polite offers of an Italian gentleman, by whom she had seated herself, to partake of some crude sausages with which he was regaling himself, the smell of which, seasoned as they were by a profusion of garlic, tended in no ways to promote appetite increased by illness and fatigue.

The light which the only lamp emitted was so faint that it was sometime ere she could discern the countenances of those around her; and, as she did so gradually, her attention was suddenly transfixed as her eyes rested on the face and form of—yes—she could not be mistaken—of Hamilton.—In a moment, she retracted every thing she had said, accepted the offer of her companion, and then, while half a dozen plates crowded before her, as suddenly rejected them all.—She knew not what she did. Light—sound—all, seemed to fade from her senses; and she knew only that she existed by the painful beating which struggled at her heart, then mounted to her throat, and rendered her speechless.—“How are you, my good fellow,” said the voice of her husband, as he rose from his seat, and stretched out his hand to shake that of Hamilton, who returned the salute as if mechanically.—The hand dropped again to his side, and ere Susan could resolve to speak with as little betrayal of emotion as she could contrive, Hamilton, with a face pale as death, rose from the table, and, staggering rather than walking to one of the doors which opened from the passage, retreated hastily within its portal, and closed it with a loudness which echoed through the silence with surprise on the part of those who had witnessed this transaction occasioned.—Lord de Tracey glanced towards his unhappy wife a look of fury; she met his eye—yet

knew not how she did so, a thousand thoughts and memories rushed before her, and she dreaded, she knew not why, to look again—what could such sudden, such uncontrollable emotion on the part of Hamilton intend?—She knew but the history of her own heart, and felt guilty.—What? Had she not then yet awoke from the dream of her early years—What could those hopes and fears, and expectations regarding him who sat beside her as her husband mean—Why the growing tenderness which she had experienced in moments of kindness which he had bestowed on her, when she had remarked with a pleasure she could not mistake the high endowments of his mind, the beauty of his countenance, the real goodness of his heart.—Why did she so fear the influence of another over his mind?

Was she not equally—not more, culpable to feel so much emotion at sight of one once beloved, but of whom she was resolved only to think as the future husband of her sister—surely it could only be the recollection of that sister, from whom he was so far severed, and from whom he was divided by the imprudence of his own conduct, which had thus awakened his agitation of feeling. Surely it was but the memory of his sweet Margaret, which had prevented him from even speaking to her sister.



## CHAPTER X.

"Certainly virtue is like precious odors, most fragrant where they are incensed or crushed."

LORD BACON.

THE tumult of thought which Hamilton's sudden and unexpected appearance had created in the mind of Susan would not have been of long duration but for the effect which she observed her disconcerted appearance had on her husband. Accustoming herself, as she had done for so long a time, and with so much steadiness of purpose, to relinquish every past regret, and to regard her former attachment as a senseless dream, she might have met again the glance which had once thrilled through her soul not only with outward calmness, but with no other feeling, save that which the tenderness of her nature bestowed on all her friends; and, had the thoughts of Hamilton been occupied as she supposed, his conduct would have aided her in triumphing over every suspicion which rested in the bosom of Lord de Tracey, with regard to the state of her feelings. But, alas! his fatal impetuosity, which was ever the cause of all his errors, had wrought a far different effect, the more alarming because there wanted not a powerful agent to complete this mischief, which, though begun through the bias of Lord de Tracey's mind, was pursued and completed by the ever watchful Contesse.

The story of Lady de Tracey's former attachment was not unknown to her, neither was the person of Hamilton, whose pursuits had unfortunately often led him on past days into her society; and though while his absence prevented the possibility of her using this knowledge for the gratification of her wicked purposes, and induced her to insinuate to Lord de Tracey

that others also had more claims on the favorable notice of Susan than himself; she now rejoiced to find the object present, whom she could point out as having really some power to alter that composure, and to impair that dignity of manner, which, being the result of virtue, she had found it hitherto utterly impossible to disturb, so as to give weight to her wicked hints and observations.

In the meantime, however, she overshot her mark in the attempt; for, when Hamilton had walked so suddenly from the apartment, she turned, as if alarmed, to Susan, offering her a smelling bottle, and begging her, with a voice of feigned compassion, to be composed. Lady de Tracey at once discerned her intention, and the effort to be so became easier. She thanked the Contesse civilly, said she was quite well, and declined her offer;—then turning to her husband, she said, “how strangely our old friend behaves! but we must forgive him. The recollection of his unhappy situation, with regard to my sister, must plead his excuse.”

Lord de Tracey cast on her a momentary smile, the meaning of which she could scarcely read; so different had been the look he gave her a moment since;—but with the consciousness of her integrity she proceeded: “Perhaps we shall see him to-morrow, and he will then explain himself.” “I hope not,” said Lord de Tracey bitterly. She said no more, and the dinner proceeded.

She wished the repast over; for she could ill brook the whispers with which the Contesse plied her husband’s ear, and to which he seemed to lend attention with eager uneasiness of feeling. When the dinner was concluded, and Susan found herself alone with her husband, she could not repress a wish to come to some explanation on a subject, the concealment of which she felt to be the chief barrier to their mutual confidence; but he was evidently unwilling to en-



upon it, and, after making several vain attempts to renew the subject, she lay down to sleep with a heavy heart, and a consciousness that she had become the prey of a wicked and designing woman.

Next morning the delay, occasioned by the absence of a sufficient number of post-horses, detained Lord de Tracey and his party some hours later at Boriglajo than he had intended. They were sitting at breakfast in the same corridor where they had dined the preceding evening, when a door opened, and Hamilton advanced towards them. His face was flushed with an unnatural effort at gaiety as he spoke first to Susan.

"I must apologise a thousand times for my extraordinary brusquerie of last night, but really my servant had so exasperated my irritable temper with his folly, that I was afraid to meet old friends in such an ill humor. How are you?" continued he, as he stretched out his hand to Lord de Tracey, "hope you did not think me quite mad—an unsafe person. If so, there was, at least, method in my madness, for I restrained myself, whatever you may think to the contrary. *Votre serviteur, Madame la Comtesse,*" said he, bowing with ironical respect to the Comtesse de Rambouillet, who returned the salutation with apparently equal dislike.

In a few moments Hamilton formed one of the party at the breakfast-table, and the conversation becoming general, no ignorant spectator could have guessed the feelings which agitated the several members of it. Fortunately for Susan, he was placed beside her, so that she could not often mark the emotion which worked on his countenance when his eyes rested upon her; but, when in a subdued voice he ventured to ask her "Have you heard lately from General Falkland?" the first words addressed exclusively to her, she felt her color change, and replied incoherently to his question. Hamilton marked her confusion, and, forgetting all save the rapturous hope that he had not

been, that he was not yet, indifferent to her, he gazed on her with an expression which Susan felt, though she did not allow herself to see it, and, lifting her eyes towards the Contesse in the silence that ensued, she marked the malignant glow of triumph which passed over her features, while Lord de Tracey rose suddenly from table, bestowing no gentle reproach on the dilatory ostler, and advising Susan to repose herself in her own room, or she would be worn out before half the day was over. Susan instantly obeyed the advice, and, with courteous kindness, and much dignity and composure of manner, she shook hands with Hamilton, wished him a prosperous journey, and retired, not, however, till she heard him say "I shall soon, I hope, have the pleasure of meeting you again, for I am also bound to Florence, and de Tracey tells me he proposes being some time there."

Oh, how earnestly did poor Susan wish that such had not been his intention ! how earnestly did she wish that such a trial might not be renewed—but she again resolved to meet it with firmness, and trusted to be guided by better strength than her own in the path of virtuous exertion, she resigned herself to whatever might occur to render it more difficult or more painful.

It was evening before the travellers reached Schneiderf's Hotel, in the street which stretches its long and varied buildings by the banks of the Arno. The weather was dull and cold, and the absence of Italy's sunshine, which lends a beauty in that climate to the meanest objects of nature, had spread a gloom over that fair city, which occasioned feelings of disappointment to those who beheld it.

Is this the stream so famed in song ? thought Susan, while she gazed on the dull and yellow tints of the Arno, as they drove to the hotel ; is this the city denoted by Dante

"La bellissima formosissima figlia di Roma?"

She expressed her disappointment to Lord de Tracey.

"You will think otherwise in a few days," said he; and he spoke truly. Next morning a brilliant and warm sunshine illumined every object, and the clear blue sky of Italy reflected its brightness on the stream below, with the picturesque forms of the magic arches of the Ponte della Trinita, and buildings the architecture of which strikes even the ignorant eye with a grace peculiar and pleasing.

Groups of figures, in the costume of the neighboring peasantry, pleased her by their novelty, if not by their beauty, for, here, the innovations made by French taste had long since supplied the place of more classical adornment, and it is only the very young and beautiful of the female sex who fail to appear to advantage under the covering of a man's hat, surmounted with a plume of feathers, although the bright ornaments of their necks and ears redeem something of the masculine figure which this style of head-dress presents.

Boys offering for sale baskets of the most delicious flowers, which seemed to mock the advance of winter, conveyed to her mind the impression of breathing the mild air which she sought for the renovation of her health, and the tinkling sound of a mandolin, with which a voice accompanied a favorite air of Rossini, lent to her imagination a pleasing sense of those southern luxuries of which she had so often dreamed in past days, and longed to enjoy; and then, with that querulous curiosity with which the heart will ask itself why it is not happy; she wondered she was not so; the next moment wiser thoughts succeeded, and, convinced that neither sight nor sound of nature, however intoxicating to the senses, could furnish happiness which is only to be derived from within, she resolved not to seek dependance upon these, therefore, but upon more unfailing sources, and with a grateful and confiding spirit she took her place by her husband at the breakfast-table, and conversed cheerfully, while he planned some excursion of pleasure for the day.

" You will, of course, go to the Gallery first," said he, " and I will accompany you thither, but I must, after that, look out for a house for you ; it would be impossible to stay in this noisy Hotel—you would die of it." Susan assented, but she knew not the cause of her husband's eagerness to remove thence. Hamilton inhabited the same Hotel ; and the jealousy, which the Contesse had fanned into a flame, would not suffer him to rest one moment longer than he could help in such a neighborhood.

For some days after their arrival at Florence, the current of Lady de Tracey's life glided smoothly by. In company with her husband, she visited many scenes of interest and beauty, and cultivated a taste naturally alive to all that was sublime in nature and in art, by gazing on works well calculated to heighten that enjoyment—so heavenly in its essence, so purifying in its employment—that of admiring the Creator not only in the works which his hands have divinely made, but those which he has enabled his creatures to do in the gifted hour of inspiration. There are many who derive little benefit from beholding these wonders. The cold eye of criticism may dilate on defects, or evince their superior judgment by admiring the mere mechanical process through which art has past to its glorious conclusions, and still remain unmoved by the sentiment which pervades the noblest production of the chisel or the pencil. The ignorant and unfeeling will gaze in silent wonder, or travel by the richest specimens of genius, in the company of equally dull spirits, turning the manners and customs of foreigners into ridicule, or canvassing the scandal of society, merely that they may return home to boast in how short a time they have made the grand tour ; and it is not seldom that English wives of this description return with the domestic peace of their houses disturbed by a tone of false excitement, which is all their minds have borrowed from a sojourn in these climates, so replete with subjects which are calculated to improve or

to debase the character, according to the spirit with which they are received.

English husbands, with a dislike to the quiet monotony of their former lives, but for which they may read their distaste in the altered manners of the female part of their little community, now no more assiduous in preparing the quiet comforts of their houses, but anxiously longing to renew their acquaintance with persons of higher rank, or more gay pursuits, whom they have met in foreign cities; or to turn once more to the desultory pleasures which they found in scenes which fewer calls on duty enabled them to pursue abroad without reproach. There is much danger to many an English woman in the style of life in which most people live on the continent; but to those who are armed with the genuine, the well grounded, principles of religion, which enable the possessor to discern between what is true and fallacious in the nature of enjoyment, much benefit may be derived from that enlargement of mind which is acquired in visiting new scenes, and above all, from the contemplation of works of a superior genius.

Susan found herself, as every Englishwoman will do in that city, surrounded, from her first arrival in Florence, by numbers of her own countrymen and women; and the invitations which she received, to mingle in their society, might have enabled her, from morning to night, to indulge as freely in dissipation as she could have done in London or in Paris. But the debility of her health afforded her an excuse for declining that against which her taste militated, for not only did she prefer the quiet of her home, in order to prove to her husband that she sought no other excitement, but because she feared also to be too much thrown in the society of Hamilton, whose conduct had already occasioned her more than once to fear that she had been mistaken with regard to the object of his affections; and, although this suspicion served perhaps to increase

her difficulty in overcoming the painful remembrance of the past; it operated also in putting her more than ever on her guard as to her own conduct, lest she should, in an unguarded moment, betray by any expression of sentiment, or of regret, that which she justly regarded as involving the honor and dignity of her husband.

It was, indeed, to her a bitter trial to have the mournful conviction daily forced on her mind of his unworthiness of all this tender regard. By degrees, he relapsed more into that course of neglect of her wishes which he had shewn when in France. No longer did he accompany her when she drove to the palaces and villas which she loved most to visit, as containing those chef d'œuvres of art which she sometimes imitated with her quick pencil, or fixed on her memory by observations made with equal accuracy of judgment and elegance of taste; no longer did he request her society when he sought the evening lounge whither the young and the gay of all nations repair, as to a soirée, for conversation and lively intercourse.

At the Contesse de Rambouillet's, who now inhabited a separate house from that in which they lived, he was ever known to be. The gay and brilliant parties, which she assembled about her of a morning, seemed to him preferable to the tête-a-têtes which he had on their first arrival at Florence appeared to enjoy so much with his young and lovely wife; and the evening coteries, which she knew too well to lend an excitement which, above all others, Susan dreaded, were invariably attended by one who disregarded the sad loneliness which awaited his virtuous and dutiful wife at home; for there she was alike excluded by the dislike she felt to that which constituted their chief pleasure, and by the orders of her physician, who prohibited her from exposing herself to the chill of the night air. To these she gave the more attention; not only because she had much faith in the skill and wisdom of

Dr. Sidney, who, with Lord Frederick Ashton, was now in Florence, but because she saw them seconded by the wish of her husband, who esteemed her too much to desire that she should mingle in companies from which he had not prudence enough himself to withdraw; and though, in this respect, she scarcely gave her husband credit for the motives which actuated him, she had too much respect for the dignity of her own character even to wish to form one of such a number as she knew those to be who sought the evening parties of the Comtesse de Rambouillet.

Susan esteemed it a circumstance of much benefit to herself that at this time she became acquainted with an elderly lady named Mrs. Vavasoni, who with her daughter had taken a house for some months in Florence. Mrs. Vavasoni was a woman of delicate constitution, and of a nature peculiarly tender and affectionate. Warm and open-hearted, she united at the same time a discretion of conduct which commanded respect, and a sweetness of manner which commanded good will. Her daughter Constance, a very young and lively girl, was beautiful in all the freshness of extreme youth and quickness of feeling. Her mind was verdant as her person, and gave promise of much that was superior in excellence of heart and charm of disposition. With these persons Susan often beguiled the loneliness of her hours. With these she re-visited those scenes where she found pleasanter occupation for her pencil, or her pen; and with these she occasionally entered into gay scenes, because Lord de Tracey would sometimes tax her with a moping melancholy, which, he said, he could not bear, and which, he added, she had better not encourage, except she wished for ever to estrange herself from him.

It was scarcely possible to resist the infectious liveliness of a young and guileless heart like that of Constance Vavasoni; and Susan felt grateful to her for the sunny gladness of her laughing face, and the cheerfulness

which her presence sometimes threw over hours which she might, but for her, have spent in solitude—perhaps in tears. Alas! those tears were not causeless; and, though she knew not the full extent of that plan which was in operation against her to undermine her happiness, she felt much of its effects in the estrangement of her husband from her confidence and affections, in his daily, nightly absence—in the harsh look and bitter words he bestowed on her, when in her presence; and in the loneliness of those hours when, in the anticipation of an event when she might have looked for all the tenderness of a husband, and all the fond hopes of one about to become a parent—she experienced nothing but coldness, and often the language of what appeared to her almost of hatred.

But such was not really the case. The heart of Lord de Tracey was indeed estranged, sadly estranged from the gentle being to whom he was united; but the bitterness which he felt towards her was still the bitterness which strong affection feels when it thinks itself unrequited, and knows its claims to be just.

Lord de Tracey still loved his wife—loved her with the passionate admiration which her beauty, her gentleness, her perfect fairness of character in all that he saw, had first inspired, and still caused him to retain for her: but, with the blindness which his own defects created, he believed the wicked reports which a cruel woman continually poured into his ear. He hated himself, for being continually, as he deemed himself deceived by an outward show of deference—of obedience and dutiful love; and whenever, allured by the loveliness of her presence, he for a moment forgot the cruel tales which he had heard against her, he rushed again, from what he termed the infatuation of his credulity, to drink in afresh that poisonous excitement which was daily augmenting the ruin of his fortune, and of his happiness.



Susan wondered why it ceased to be as on their first arrival at Florence; why Lord de Tracey no longer remained, as then, with her. Why the Contesse de Rambouillet had at that time, so sedulously avoided his society, only to seek it again with such redoubled ardour—she wondered, but she could not indeed have guessed the cause. It needed other imaginations than those which could have suggested themselves to a mind pure as hers to have conceived the hateful plan which she began at that time to concert, and which she contrived with hateful talent to succeed in so completely.

Susan now began more clearly than ever to discern the danger which attended her in those meetings with Hamilton which he contrived to effect, and to shun them; but she knew not, she could not know, the cause of his permitting a fact so long kept secret to be now disclosed. And when she was forced to acknowledge to herself that she was herself the object of Hamilton's love, she felt that he had furnished her with stronger motives than ever for concealing the fact of that attachment having been mutual in the absence of that esteem, without which the heart of a virtuous woman recoils from its own pulsations, should it still throbb to all that remains of love.

## CHAPTER XI.

*"Les femmes sont extremes ; elles sont moilleures ou pires que les hommes."*

LA BRUYERE.

ON the morning after Hamilton's arrival in Florence, he was awoke by a billet being put into his hands by the lacquais de place who waited upon him.

He at once recognised the hand-writing of the Contesse de Rambouillet, a woman for whom he entertained a strong aversion, as he regarded her as one of the authors of his present unhappiness. He was about to throw it away unread, when he observed the obsequious lacquais still standing beside him—Does this wait an answer? enquired he. "Eccellezasi," was the reply. He then tore it open, and read the following words in French. "If you are disengaged this afternoon, pray do not fail to be with me at two o'clock, as I have something to disclose to you deeply affecting your happiness."

C. R.

Hamilton hesitated a moment, but the remembrance of the company in which he had so lately seen the Contesse awakened in his mind a hope which made him forget his determination to renounce all communication with a person whom he at once disliked and despised ; and though he scarcely defined what it was which actuated him in so doing, he returned a verbal message, that he would do himself the honor of waiting upon the Contesse, at the hour she desired.

This done, his thoughts busily reverted to the remembrance of Susan, whom he had lately seen so lovely, yet so dejected—so altered from what he remembered her. He thought of her agitation and melancholy countenance, on the day when they had part-

ed in London—of her sudden start, and hasty retreat, when he had passed her in the Bois de Boulogne—of the illness of which he had heard immediately after. Could it be possible that he was himself the cause—could it be possible that she had once loved him? If so, was not the bitterness of her future prospects bitterer still, and would it not add to the agony of his lonely existence to know that her days had been already haunted by the grief of forbidden hopes; and should he add one pang to the struggle she was making to overcome past remembrances, by acquainting her with that which had hitherto never passed his lips; and to which he knew her to be a stranger? He resolved that, come what might, he would not be the serpent in her path.

No; he would linger out his wretched life with that untold grief withering the spring of it. Yet should this woman be the bearer of any thing that regarded the beloved one of his heart—any thing by which he might perhaps be enabled to serve her, or even her husband; for her sake, he would forget himself, and enter upon the occupation with gladness. Perhaps some difficulty in their pecuniary matters might have preyed upon her, so as thus to alter her appearance.

For he knew Lord de Tracey to be much involved. Could it be possible that his advice might be deemed useful, as he was unfortunately too well-versed in matters occasioning such difficulties, not to be able to tender it. But then the Contesse, he thought, was scarcely the person to apply to.

In this state of suspense and anxiety did Hamilton await the hour which was to bring him into the presence of the Contesse; and scarcely had the clock of the Dicoma struck two, when, knocking gently at the door of the Contesse's apartment, a voice from within told him to enter, and he stood in her presence. His assumed gaiety of the preceding day had vanished; and when she looked at his thin pale countenance,

she read in it the conviction of her ability to finish a work which she had begun with equal malignity and address, and to which she was actuated by natural love of intrigue, avarice and revenge; and last, not least, the power of a passion to which she had been hitherto a stranger; but which now burned the more fiercely, from the fear of its being unrequited.

"Ah, mon cher Hamilton," said she, giving him one of her white hands to kiss, and smiling with an assumed kindness, which, for a moment deceived him into forgetfulness of what he knew her to be, "how glad I am to see you; and yet how sorry—sorry, because you look so ill, so very ill—glad because I think I can make you better. It makes every one better to be happy. Poor Lady de Tracey positively looks better already to-day, and surely you can guess the cause!"

"And is that universal panacea in your keeping, lady?" said Hamilton, with an ironical smile (which the Contesse failed not to remark) while he pretended to disregard her latter allusion to Lady de Tracey. "Perhaps most of your slaves would not hesitate a moment in ascribing to you such power; but you will remember it is now long since I dared enrol myself among their number, or claim their high privileges."

The Contesse bit her lips, and was for a moment silent. Shall I, thought she, occasion one throb of pleasure to a being whom I detest? But she recollected the necessity she had imposed on herself to afford him this gratification for the prosecution of her own malignant schemes, and, stifling the resentment which the irony of Hamilton's manner occasioned, she continued, "In this instance, at least, I stand exonerated from that vanity, said to be, the chief attribute of our sex, and am fully aware that the bondage under which you are held is drawn by other power than mine."

She looked steadfastly at her victim as she spoke, and found in his attentive silence a good argument for her success. "May I ask," she said, "if I am the

first who has given you a hint of the reason of Lady de Tracey's present unhappiness with her husband? Can you pretend to be ignorant of it?" The color mounted into Hamilton's face for a moment, and a beam of joy sparkled in his eye, but a deadly paleness succeeded, and, with a strong effort to conceal what passed through his mind, he replied, "I am not the depository of Lady de Tracey's secrets, nor do I suppose that if she could have been guilty of the indiscretion of breathing them to the ears of a stranger, that she would have chosen one, whose *friendship* with her husband is the talk of the world, as her *confidante*. I am totally ignorant of the private history of Lady de Tracey's married life, but wish most devoutly that she may be as happy as I know her to be deserving."

The Contesse laughed aloud. "Well said, *mon hero de Roman*; that is fine—uncommonly fine; what a pity that Talma could not have heard that spirited reply, and seen that energetic gesticulation. It would have been worth twice his fortune. But, come, come, *mon ami*, you cannot so easily deceive a woman who knows a little more of affairs of that kind than you imagine. *Rouge et noir*, you know, are as easily discerned in this matter as in that with which we are both pretty well acquainted; and I have that to tell you, if you behave with more courtesy, and less affectation, which will change the character of your heroics, and put you in better humor with yourself. You are, I believe, a little more of a *preux chevalier* than you pretend, to allow a fair lady to pine for love of you, while you surrender her to the tender mercies of a husband who cannot bear her. He has long since discovered the mistake he made in marrying her in a moment of transient passion; and she, as you know, was fully alive to the tyranny of the old General, who forced her to the match, under the impression that he was a great *parti*. She is a fickle little soul after all, however, or she would not so soon have forgotten you,

and made Lord Frederick Ashton the confidante of her matrimonial distresses."

Hamilton started. The big drops stood upon his brow, and he could scarcely refrain from the dreadful imprecation, which quivered on his lips.—"Ah, I am glad to find you can no longer act *le bel indifférent*"—said the Contesse, with an ironical pleasure, which incensed her hearer to a state of almost phrenzy.

"But you must be calm if you wish to hear more,—This Lord Frederick," continued she, dwelling on the name, because she saw it was that which enflamed his curiosity, and unfitted him for concealment of his feelings. "This Lord Frederick Ashton, I think you know him, do you not? he calls himself a friend of yours." Hamilton slightly bowed—"Well, you are aware how meek and mild he is, what a gracious dignity sets on that immovable, pale countenance of his; and what high pretensions he makes to morality and irreproachable conduct:—however it turns out that, like most hypocrites of this description, he so won on the good will—or credulity—or weakness—call it what you will, of your fair Susan, that she confessed to him the whole history of her fruitless attachment to you—unfolded to him the mystery of her romantic concealment of this fact, on account of your supposed love for her sister; which she told him was more than returned by that unfortunate damsel. Now this was unfair. Was it not? she had a right to tell her own misfortunes, if she chose it, though an ardent lover like Lord Frederick was rather an odd person to select as a listener."

Hamilton writhed at every word, and she continued. "Well, the fair Susan, did not confine herself to the account of that forced marriage, which threw her into a state of despair, which brought her almost to the tomb.—She proceeded to relate the history of her husband's indifference—harshness and neglect; of the only hope which kept her alive—*i. e. t*

meeting with you, as she had heard you were somewhere in Italy, and trusted that Florence, the general rendezvous of English, might be the place of your destination.

"Upon this Lord Frederick left her, as you may suppose, in anger and despair; and, after entreating me to watch over her conduct, as he pretends to entertain a kind of sentimental respect for her character; he left the Chateau—saying he should not soon again behold her—no sooner, however, does he know you to be in Florence, than he writes to a friend of his, who informed me of his intention, that he is to be here in a few days; but you are before him. Cast not away the happiness which is in reserve for you; but seek the society of your beloved Susan. Lord de Tracey is jealous of every body, not because he cares for his wife, but because he has an English pride, which will not allow of his granting her a little innocent flirtation; but he has not a notion of her love for you, and believes all she has told of your being the intended of her sister.

"And now, what think you of your fair virtuosa? as lovely, as retiring as ever; but not quite so very unkind.—All Englishwomen are the same—all prudes in manners—all coquettes at heart. Don't look so indignant, for I do believe she still prefers you to Lord Frederick with his long face; although I confess that confidences are dangerous things. Be assured, *mon ami*, when once a woman makes a confidant of her friend, she will soon regard him as a lover. This, by the by," added she, laughing, "is a general rule, and I stand an exception; for, handsome though you be, I assure you, I have not the smallest wish to enrol you among my slaves; that is to say, not above a very short time. You may, for a week or two, appear to be my *intime*, and Lord de Tracey may play the farce of good attentive husband, in the meanwhile; but after that—adieu, *bon jour*. You go your way,

"I ———; and now farewell. If you do not choose to regard me as your friend I cannot help it; but you must own I deserve your good will." So saying, she rose hastily, and left the room. Hamilton stood for a moment in silence; then, with hasty steps, retreated to his own apartment.

Disgust, contempt, and redoubled hatred, towards the author of the intelligence he had just received were the feelings with which he rewarded the wicked Contesse; nor could he for some time so far doubt the testimony of his former observation of the character of his beloved Susan as to give entire credit to the base calumnies which she had uttered as facts. But there was, unfortunately, enough semblance of reality, in that which she had told, as to occasion many a conflicting feeling which alternately agonised him, and re-awoke hopes which had once been the enchantment of his life; but which he felt he had for ever lost.

Now was the hour when the generosity of his nature had to contend alone with impetuous and ill-regulated feelings. No steady principles derived from Christian motives were there to bring the battle to a triumph of virtuous indignation;—and the exhibition of truth over blind passions, and the mask of hateful dissimulation and falsehood. He *did not*—he would not believe Susan to be guilty of disclosing the history of her affections to a stranger, who sought her confidence in the guise of a lover; but he *did* believe, because past occurrences assisted his credulity, and his heart and his vanity were alike pleased by the belief, that she had indeed loved him; that devotion to a sister, to whom he knew her affection to be strong, had induced her to suppress the expression of her attachment when he had indirectly sought to induce her to do so.

He did believe her unhappy, for he had heard of her illness. He had seen her altered appearance. But how could he now repair the evil? Could he restore



to her the affections of an unkind husband, by rendering himself more amiable in her eyes than he? Could he prove to her the irrevocable mistake she had made, in supposing her sister to be the object of his love, by confessing it when she was now the partner of another's life? No—never would he be guilty of increasing an unhappiness, which he feared was already her lot, by such base dishonorable conduct, yet could he not bring himself to withdraw from her society. He would seek it—observe the terms on which she stood with Lord de Tracey—see whether Lord Frederick Ashton were indeed the villain which he would never be—expose him as such, and, perhaps, contrive to break that intimacy with the Contesse de Rambouillet, which he knew could be productive of no good to any domestic circle. But, alas! poor Hamilton, with all his natural generosity of disposition, and honorable feeling, relied too much on the mere impulse of his heart; and while inwardly resolved never to tempt the heart of one whom he justly regarded as among the purest and most perfect of her sex, he was not aware that in seeking, as he did, her society, he was but gratifying his own inclinations, and fanning a flame which the voice of duty vainly whispered should be for ever quenched in his bosom.

The arrival of Lord Frederick Ashton in Florence, soon after this conversation, awoke that jealousy which the wicked words of the Contesse had so greatly excited; and, while he thought himself on the watch to discover a traitor, he was himself the agent which executed that vile plan conceived by the hateful malignity of a woman, who was resolved, for her own purposes, to destroy an union which she wished to sever eternally.

The influence which she strove to exert at first over Hamilton, by her calumnies, she continued for some time to keep alive by constant intercourse with him, during that period in which Lord de Tracey was so much in the society of his amiable wife. Tal-

ents, suppressed by that inward contempt which Susan felt for the Contesse, and which united to her natural timidity, and the fear of committing herself before one whom she knew to be eminently clever, now shone forth with a mild and winning lustre, which brought fresh admiration to the love of her husband, and he wondered that, long as he had known her, he had never till then, fully appreciated her superior intellect and elegance of taste. On her part, Susan was more than ever alive to those endowments of mind which Lord de Tracey really possessed, and if the affection which she entertained for him partook not of that overpowering feeling which she had known in the romantic dreams of her early love; she felt a growing tenderness; a gentle, but gradual, approach to that which she had deemed for ever inadmissible in her heart, which convinced her of the possibility of enjoying a tranquil happiness superior to that which falls to the lot of most people; and, with a grateful heart for having been enabled so far to triumph over past feeling, she trusted still to persevere in dutiful affection, and to meet its reward in that way in which she read the promise in these words—"A good man shall be satisfied from himself."

But this was not to be of long duration. No sooner had the Contesse secured, or imagined she had secured, the friendship of Hamilton, and knew that he regarded her in the light of a compassionate friend; but she next turned her intention to that which engrossed her every thought, and was the cause of her every project.

It was long since she had entertained a violent passion for Lord de Tracey, and, from the moment she heard of his marriage, the hope of revenge had actuated her every thought and feeling. True, indeed, she had by large loans of money ensnared him to that degree that she knew he could not free himself altogether of her society. She knew his difficulties to be

kept secret from his father ; and that the management of his estates in France, which had in fact become her own, required, or at least seemed to require, his presence ; and from the moment of his return, she had not ceased to load him with benefits, which she pretended to be entirely disinterested ; and while she strove to persuade him of her benevolence and her friendship, and recommended herself by her talents to his constant notice, she thought that she would soon succeed in claiming that tenderness of which she daily strove to rob his young and innocent wife.

This, however, she found to be no easy matter—she did not know, for she could not even imagine, that it was not only

“ The might—the majesty of loveliness,”

so far superior to her faded and repaired beauty, which held the heart of Lord de Tracey captive to the charms of his lovely, youthful Susan. There is a power in virtue, to subdue and enthrall the most erring dispositions, which she dreamed not of, and, spite of all her talents, all her guileful arts—all her lavishing of her time—her money—her talents, to bring to herself the affections of Lord de Tracey, she found herself laboring in vain,—and watched with hateful despair the utter impotency of all her wiles to gain one shadow of that which the gentle, lovely object of her jealousy never failed to obtain from the heart of her admiring, though erring, husband.

The insinuations which she had made with regard to Lord Frederick, in the hopes of first arousing his jealousy and then his hatred, had at first succeeded ; but these she found herself forced gradually to let drop, because she saw that they at least ceased to work their effect. There was on this occasion no semblance of truth with which to veil her own baseness ; and the fear of detection forced her to relinquish all hopes in that respect : but the time was now come when her

knowledge of past events served to assist her in her diabolical project; and when she saw Hamilton, in the blindness of his own feelings, effecting part of her scheme, she turned the whole force of her machinations on Lord de Tracey, and, having related to him the cause of her frequent intimacies with Hamilton, as being for his sake, the apparent confidant of his love for Susan; she proceeded with much seeming compassion to pity the latter for her ill-fated affection for that imprudent young man—dilated on the perversity of her taste, when possessed of so admirable a companion for life—to prefer the dissipated, the unprincipled Hamilton: and while she flattered the vanity of the man, pleased the weakness of the husband by admiring the loveliness of his wife, confessing the impossibility of any man who had been so much in her society to resist the fascinations of her charms; while she did not fail to throw in hints of facts which had come to her knowledge of the proofs which Susan had given to her admirers that their admiration was not indifferent to her.

She implored Lord de Tracey not to betray her to his wife, as she said how much she dreaded losing her friendship—bade him be less strict in his watch over her conduct, and less teasingly attentive, as she acknowledged having heard her one day say to Lord Frederick how tiresome attentive husbands were; and besides, added she, “that always makes a woman a more cunning coquette, and is less easily cured.”

In the meantime, those parties of pleasure were gathered around her which met the ill-fated tastes of Lord de Tracey, and induced him again to rush to that baneful source of excitement which had already so much misled him, and by which he now laid himself under heavier obligations than ever to the Comtesse.

He repaired, indeed, to these with a heavy heart, nor was it often without the aid of stimulating intoxi-

cation that he was enabled to conquer the bitter feelings with which he now saw Hamilton frequently in the society of his wife. The latter met him, indeed, with the same pale and dejected, but innocent and gentle countenance. There was a mournfulness in its expression which ill accorded with those injurious suspicions which haunted him every hour; and might have convinced him, had he sought its explanation, that his neglect was its cause. But he had listened to the voice of the deceiver, and, infatuated by its horrid intonations, he was doomed to bear in the agony of a distracted mind, fears which scared sleep from his eyelids, and left to him but the excitement of guilty pleasure, as a respite from torture.

## CHAPTER XII.

"Content am I, if heaven should give  
But happiness to thee;  
And as wi' thee I'd wish to live,  
For thee I'd bear to die."

BURNS.

"Enchantment has no amulet for virtue half so powerful as a fervent and honorable attachment."

EDINBURGH REVIEW. No. 122.

ONE morning, when Susan was seated as usual alone in her drawing room, the door opened, and Lord Frederick Ashton was announced. Susan was always happy in the society of this person. There was in his manners an entire absence of that male coquetry, which often made her shun the visits of many otherwise agreeable persons of the other sex, because she well knew that the situation of a neglected wife is one of peculiar danger to the character of young women; and holding as she did, in spite of his unkindness, the honor and dignity of her husband to be kept sacred by one who had once undertaken to do so, she often repeated to herself the meaning of that proverb, "Cæsar's wife must not be suspected;" and therefore set a watch over the minutest action of her daily life, lest she should, in an unguarded moment, give the smallest occasion for the voice of reproach against herself to wound a husband's ear. Little did she know how utterly her intentions had been long since defeated. Little could she suspect that one of those whose quiet, dignified and respectful manner, enabled her to receive without fear into her society, was the person whom Lord de Tracey regarded with the most disquiet, next to him whose former situation with regard to her had given better grounds for alarm.

Had Susan still retained any fear of jealousy on his part towards Lord Frederick, which she trusted she had long since silenced, they would have been banished by the observation which daily intercourse enabled her to make of his growing attachment for her young friend Constance Vavasoni; and it was to her kind heart a source of real gratification to find that another than her sister had taken the place in the affections of this estimable and amiable person. She could not but hope that his valuable good opinion was not a matter of indifference to her young friend; for, though so young and timid as to blush at the mere suspicion of the power of her charms, she thought she could perceive in her, when in his presence, an unusual quietness and reserve of manner, which betrayed the awakening sensations of tenderness, and which only rendered her natural liveliness and openness of heart the more attractive.

When Lord Frederick had returned the morning salutation of Susan, she thought she perceived in his manner a degree of nervousness for which she could scarcely account. Every subject on which she endeavored to speak he seemed to elude, as if unable to give it his attention, and so intense was his agitation that he at length threw himself on an arm-chair, exclaiming, "I cannot speak it. Forgive my foolishness. I came hither with the intention of unfolding a subject to one whom, I think, I may venture to call my friend. But I find it one of difficulty—will you assist me?"

There is nothing more infectious than nervousness, and Susan, she knew not why, partook of his emotion, and felt herself utterly unable to say anything. She sat before him, pale, like himself, with her head resting on her hand, and twisting the bunch of flowers which lay before her, into a thousand shapes, yet could not utter a word. They were thus situated, when the door suddenly opened again, and Mr. Hamilton was announced. It was some time since he had ventured

thus to pay a morning visit. The kindness with which Susan had first met him had been exchanged for a coldness and distance, which the general tone of his manner had induced her, as a duty, to assume, and by which, she hoped to prove to him, without the necessity of more explicit words, that such conduct was not agreeable to her wishes.

It was, therefore, with some astonishment, and more concern, that she now beheld him, for, without speaking on the subject, she was aware that he had felt what she intended to convey to his mind, and unwilling, though she still was, to blame him, she felt angry at his presence, as an intrusion.

The coldness of her salutation startled and alarmed him, but when he looked at Lord Frederick, and read, with his usual penetration, that something of an agitating nature had been passing in his mind, the thoughts of that which the Contesse had disclosed rushed across his mind, and, ere he could find time or prudence to repress the vehemence of his feelings, he addressed him in language almost offensive; and had not Lord Frederick been possessed of a temper peculiarly calm and a mildness which was the result of genuine good feeling and good principle, a quarrel must have ensued; as it was, the forbearance of the latter obliged Hamilton to refrain from the impetuosity which prompted him; and, after a few minutes spent by no means pleasantly to poor Susan, who saw, at a glance, the cause of all this disagreeable contention, Hamilton took his leave, and Lord Frederick was again left alone with her.

It was now her turn to feel agitated and distressed; aware, as she was, that Lord de Tracey was acquainted with the circumstances of her former intimacy with Hamilton, she feared lest the anger he had betrayed should give him cause to suspect that he had just rea-



son for jealousy, yet, unwilling to compromise her dignity by even alluding to that against which the irreproachable tenor of her conduct was the best antidote, she awaited in silence the judgment which she feared Lord Frederick might pass on her, for so high did she hold his good opinion that she was grieved at the dread of forfeiting it in any respect.

Her fears were, however, groundless. Lord Frederick, better acquainted than she knew him to be with the temper and feelings of his friend, had discerned in a moment the cause of his instability; and, while he admired the blush of honest pride, which tinged the cheek of the lovely being who sat beside him; and that safe-guard of feminine excellence, which is found in watchfulness, to abstain from all appearance of evil; he thought he *could* give her no better proof of the perfect reliance he had in her virtue and excellence than to make her, as he intended, the repository of his hopes with regard to one whom he wished to make the partner of his life; and whom he rejoiced to think had in Lady de Tracey so excellent a friend and adviser.

"I am not sorry," he said, "that this interruption has occurred; although I fear it was unpleasant to you, as it always is to be in the society of those who cannot agree, and yet I believe the fault is not mine; but I am no favorite of poor Hamilton, though I do not despair of altering his present unfavorable opinion of me. He has, however, given me courage to enter upon a subject very near my heart; and to which, I trust, you will, with your usual kindness, lend me for a few moments your valued attention."

Susan assured Lord Frederick how gladly she entered into anything that could interest him, and added, "you must feel that gratitude demands this of me—your friendly conduct to my husband and myself must ever ensure from me the liveliest feelings of grateful esteem."

Tears filled her eyes as she spoke, for the weakness of her frame was much increased by the long course of mental trial which she had undergone; and though she seldom suffered herself to speak of her husband when she could not do so with those sentiments she wished to entertain for him; yet, on this occasion she was enabled to do so without compromising any confidence, and she felt that he whom she addressed was their mutual friend.

"Do not speak of gratitude," said Lord Frederick, pressing her hand kindly as he spoke. "It is I who experience that for a friendship which will, I trust, be lasting. You are aware of that circumstance which first interested me so much in your welfare. My attachment for your beautiful and amiable sister, although unrequited by any return on her part, had prepared me to feel for any one connected with her a more than common interest; and I need not add how much happiness I have derived from the society of those whom I esteem and admire so much. I had thought never again to experience that fervour of affection for another woman which I entertained for her; perhaps," added he, with a sigh, "I do not now; but the gentle tenderness—the graceful liveliness—the endearing and affectionate manners of Constance Vavasoni have taught me to turn from the wreck of past hopes to a more smiling prospect.

"The resemblance which my eye traces, or imagines it traces, between her features and those of your sister, led me first to gaze on her with an admiration, which has kindled into a warmer sentiment; and I feel that, if happiness be yet in store for me, that blessed hope is in her keeping. Tell me, Lady de Tracey, I intreat you, do you think I dare to anticipate any return? Can her buoyant spirits find anything to please her in my sombre melancholy countenance?—Alas! I fear not. Yet, if the devotion of a heart which feeds on the hope of adding gladness to the path of that sweet

being's life could avail aught with her—I will not yet despair; though I dare not yet reveal to her my secret. Will you, dear Lady de Tracey, be the bearer of my hopes to her? Will you intercede for me? Can you do so with confidence in behalf of your faithful friend, loving, as you do, the gentle creature whose fate I long to decide?"

Susan gladly undertook the embassy. She felt indeed an assurance of their mutual happiness from the long intimacy which had enabled her to appreciate the superior worth of Lord Frederick's character; and from those observations on the dispositions of her young friend towards him. But no sooner had she promised to "speak of him as he was," and with a smile which was the offspring of happier thoughts than she had experienced for many a day—assured him that if she knew aught of woman's heart, he need not despair, than the sound of a guitar was heard under the windows, struck by a hand of no ordinary skill and taste, and, arrested by its sweetness, she paused for a moment to listen.

The house which she inhabited was situated within a garden, at a short distance from one of the gates of the Town; but notwithstanding its being removed from the bustle of the more crowded parts of Florence, wandering minstrels often found their way within its precincts, and the sound of music was therefore only unusual on this occasion from its superiority.

Lady de Tracey arose, and, looking from the open window, perceived a girl in a peasant's habit, who thus struck the chords of her instrument, and soon with a voice of inexpressible sweetness sung to her accompaniment.

"Un Serto di fiori  
Li'cori mi dié,  
E nice cortese  
I'en preese da me—

Chi pin del suo core,  
L'amore mostro  
Ch'il fiore mé tolse  
O chi me'l dono."

Lord Frederick's curiosity was far less active than that of his companion, and, engrossed with his own hopes and fears, he still sat musing where Lady de Tracey had left him, and scarcely observed that, opening the door gently, she had stolen from the apartment, until, looking round, he found himself alone.

Deeming her return immediate, he resumed his meditations, nor did the time appear long which elapsed during her absence.

"Ah, my cunning one," said Susan, when, issuing from the door of the house, she laid her hand on the white hand which still lingered over the chords of her instrument: "I have found you out, Italian voices are richer in their tones, but none have I yet heard so sweet. Forgive the flattery—and unmask—By the token of that veil you should be a Genoese minstrel; but, by that glossy ringlet which has escaped its confinement, I know my Constance."

The laughing girl threw her veil aside, and, taking the arm of her friend, she entered the house.—"I thought," she said "it were a shame you should not enjoy a serenade in your solitude, and mamma brought me in the carriage to the garden gate, to enable me to practise this cheat upon you: but I should have chosen a later hour for deception. Day-light is a traitor?" "By what reward do you expect, dear Constance," said Lady de Tracey, smiling, "for your minstrelsy? I have one in my keeping, I think, which you will not despise."

"Tell me—tell me, dear Susan, what is it? I feel so joyous to-day, I do not know why, for I have been sad—sad for many days, and my dearest mamma was so vexed to see me so, she rejoiced as much as I did at any little plan of amusement to enliven me."

"And why were you so sad," enquired Susan with a smile. "May I guess?"

"If you like it," said Constance, drawing her veil again over her face, which was suffused with a crimson blush.

"You have not seen so often the countenance of one who has been too sad to venture into your presence, yet whose absence served only to augment his melancholy. Am I right? My dear Constance, you need not tell me so," added she, pressing her in her arms as they reached together the drawing-room door. It was open, and, as they entered the room, the hand of Constance was extended to Lord Frederick, who advanced at the sound of her voice to meet her.

"You did not tell me," said she reproachfully to Susan, while mingled smiles and blushes encreased the loveliness of her countenance, on which the gaze of Lord Frederick was rivetted.

"What will you think of me?" said she; "and I cannot disengage myself from this attire until Mamma's return." "Oh! he will think," said Susan, with a tender grace of manner, which disclosed her secret at once to the delighted hearts of her companions—"He will think he is the happiest of beings in finding his dearest hope realized: but I will leave him to tell you what he thinks, dear Constance, for my presence is required elsewhere"—so saying she withdrew; and the happy lovers breathed in each other's arms the tender tale which was the prelude to the union of two pure and virtuous and happy hearts.

The arrival of Mrs. Vavasoni confirmed their bliss: and Susan rejoiced in the prospect of happiness, which received a parent's warmest blessing and approval. Susan did not long delay to write to her sister, to inform her of this joyful event. She felt glad that her letter would contain a more cheerful spirit than she had been able for sometime even to assume in writing: and she knew that her kind-hearted Margaret would sympathize with her in the happiness of one for whom

she entertained a sincere regard, and of whose disappointment she had grieved to be the cause.

To the generous-hearted there are few personal enjoyments superior to those derived from witnessing the happiness of others. Like the reflected sun-beams from glassy waters, it sheds a beauty on the cloudy hours of a blighted heart, and touches the most barren object with a gladdening light which, for a time at least, dissipates the gloom of selfish sorrow.

## CHAPTER XIII.

"This courtesy is not of the right breed."

HAMLET.

"He came—I could not breathe,  
For his eye was upon me."

SONG.

IT was no trifling pleasure to the warm and affectionate heart of Margaret to hear from a sister, so much beloved, in a better strain of spirits than she had done for a long time, and the letter, which Susan had penned in the hour of joyful sympathy with her amiable friends, failed not to impart the happiness she had anticipated to her father and sister. Some wintry months had elapsed, and found these two amiable persons in perfect retirement, their old friends, Mr. Montgomery and the chaplain, being their only guests. Conte Olinska and his wife had been summoned to their own land, some time past, and those who visited the Highlands, for the sole purpose of gratifying their love for field sports, were long since departed to scenes which afforded amusement of a different nature, where business or pleasure ruled the passing hours.—

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The engrossing interest of Margaret's past life she now found herself condemned to relinquish for ever, and although remembrance would often linger on those delightful dreams which were the offspring of the ardor of a first and pure affection, yet she felt that her maidenly dignity would be indeed compromised, and her sense of duty degraded, did she permit herself to encourage sentiments of love for a person who never had, nor never could, return them, and the effort she made to conceal that to forget him required a struggle enabled her to convince her kind father that she had

indeed triumphed over her regrets. It was with heart-felt pain that she observed how much this beloved and honored parent grieved over the knowledge, which he now possessed, of the unfortunate attachments of his children, and she resolved, if possible, to free him of all his anxiety on her account, at least.

"You see," said she to her father, as she sat at his feet, after reading to him her sister's letter, "You see that she seems very happy, and her health is better, too; I am sure all will, yet, go well, and then she will return to us. Oh, what a joyful day that will be! Will it not, dearest father?" added she, kissing the withered hand which lay in hers.

"Indeed it will, love," said General Falkland; but the sigh which escaped him, as he spoke, shewed that his hopes were scarcely so bright as those of his daughter.

Margaret was glad to change the subject, and said, smiling, "I hope you do not forget, my dear papa, that we are this day invited to dine with Mr. Lazenby and Mrs. Stewart. Mr. Montgomery has determined to accompany us, and I promise myself much pleasure, or at least, much amusement, in fulfilling this engagement. Sir Thomas and Lady M'Call are to be there, so we shall see the bride at last, and I may learn to bear my disappointment as well as I can."

General Falkland smiled, and when Margaret saw him cheered by her liveliness, she bade him adieu, and repaired to her sitting with Mr. Montgomery. The picture was almost finished, and seldom did a lovelier portrait tell of the beauty of its original.

When evening came, the torrents of rain which fell almost dissuaded General Falkland from accompanying his daughter to the dinner-party at Lazenby-hall, but he thought he saw regret in her countenance, as he spoke of remaining behind, and, expressing his hope that it would do harm to none but the horses, seated himself beside her, and was soon, with his friends, on his way thither.



"Sir Thomas has scarcely done as much good to our Highland roads," said he, "as he promised, for I think they are worse than ever." And he spoke truly, for it was not without much difficulty that the carriage, drawn by four strong horses, had made half their way to the place of their destination, when it suddenly stopped, and loud and imploring voices were heard entreating, for pity's sake, to take in those who thus complained, from the inclemency of the weather. These proceeded from three *soi disant* young ladies of no ordinary height and breadth, who, arrayed in all the brightness of red, blue, and yellow, stood by the way-side, vainly endeavoring to hold an umbrella so as to shield their ponderous head-dresses from the storm, and pointing, piteously, to a reclining post-chaise, which the heavy roads, and their united weight, had deprived of one of its wheels, and which the driver was apparently attempting in vain to repair.

General Falkland and Margaret immediately invited these hapless damsels to seat themselves in their carriage, and after much shaking of petticoats, and many apologies for the dirt of their shoes, and the absence of curls to their dishevelled locks, they seated themselves beside them, and the carriage drove on.

This addition to their party formed no small amusement to Margaret, who listened alternately to their lamentations at the accident, their good fortune in thus meeting such kind friends, and their despair at the figures they would present before the bride, who was evidently the object of their wonder and admiration.

"What will Lady Mac Call think of us?" said Miss Betsey, the youngest, with an accent of despair.

"And what will papa say, when he hears of the nice ride we have had," rejoined her eldest sister. "How will he envy us being with Miss Margaret!"

"Will you go in first, dear Miss," said Miss Johnstone, imploringly, "that they may not see our shoes?"

"I hope the rooms may not be very well lighted," said the second.

"Oh, never mind," rejoined the sister, who began to be ashamed of her sisters' egotism, and tried to change the subject. "People very often look best when the hair is out of curl, do they not Mr. Montgomery? More of the picturesque in it. I hear you have *done* such a beautiful picture of Miss Margaret—so wild and sentimental," added she, casting her head to one side, and looking in his face, to extort that admiration which she thought she deserved. But she met no answering glance, and continued, "what a charming woman Mrs. Stewart is—so very well informed, and so humble, too. She teaches all her sons Greek and Algebra. And then Mr. Lazenby—how beautifully he writes! He sent papa twelve copies of his *Inagonia*; and papa says it is the best book he has ever read on the subject."

"May I ask what that book contains?" said Margaret, who feared Mr. Montgomery's patience would scarcely outlive the drive, should these scraps of conversation continue much longer to be addressed to him; and who hoped some variety from her observation of a large volume, bound in red morocco, which Miss Betsey held beneath her arm.

"Oh, it is my album," replied she. Mr. Montgomery groaned. "I always carry it about with me, in case I should see any one who will put a drawing in it; and I hear Miss Mac Call has so much taste—quite an artist; and now I do hope that, as we have met Mr. Montgomery, he will be so kind as to give me one of his. You will see, sir, you need not be ashamed of doing so. I never put anything but the very best in mine." So saying, she opened it, and exhibited it to the eyes of poor Mr. Montgomery what was termed, in the golden letters above it, "*The Highland Lass.*" The face, hands, and feet were made of white satin, pasted on the paper, and on which the forms of what intended to be mouth, eyes, and nose, were painted with blue, and black, and red.

The dress was made of velvet, and the feather stuck in the black satin bonnet was also from the life, being part of a goose's wing.

The situation of Mr. Montgomery and Margaret, in such close opposition to the damsel who had prepared this wonderful exhibition of taste, was really painful; for it was with difficulty that they preserved a tolerable degree of gravity. Hoping, however, that the next page might be somewhat less trying to their risible faculties, Margaret hastily turned it, when, lo, "The Highland Lad," habited in suitable attire, represented by the same embossments, met their eyes.

"Did you do that yourself?" said Mr. Montgomery, with a tone almost fierce.

"Every bit," said Miss Betsey, with jocund alacrity. "Mr. Stenhouse just touched the cheeks; but I think they were quite as well before."

"I dare say," rejoined Mr. Montgomery.

"Oh, but," said Miss Johnstone eagerly, "he has not seen the ship yet. Shew him the ship," continued she. "I put the lines to it; and if you will make a drawing, I assure you I will put some to yours too."

The page was turned, and the wooden machine, intended to represent a vessel in full sail, filled its ample dimensions. Two figures, at least as large as the mast, sat in the fore-ground; and, like their predecessors, were decently attired in scraps from Miss Johnstone's wardrobe. Beneath them were written, in gold and red, the following lines, which Miss Johnstone wished to be mistaken for her own:

"Once more upon the waters, and once more—  
And the wave bounds beneath me as a steed  
'That knows its rider."

"I'm sure it does," said Mr. Montgomery, closing the book; "for it's just as like the one as the other."

"What taste he has," whispered Miss Betsey, and she had fortunately no time to retract her judgment at that time, or to discover that it lay in contempt of her

drawings, &c.; for the carriage stopped at the door of Mr. Lazenby.

The single candle with which the servant came out to light the guests blew out as the door opened; and the party found some difficulty in getting in safety over the wet and slippery steps to the hall. Margaret trembled for her father; for she heard him cough, and dreaded the effect of damp on his delicate health.

"How fortunate it is so dark," whispered Miss Johnstone.

"Pray go in first," said her sister, at the same time giving no gentle pinch to Margaret.

The servant opened the drawing-room door, and announced the guests.

"Well, this is delightful, my dear ladies," said old Mr. Lazenby, advancing with a head just powdered, and from which, every shake of self-satisfaction brought a snowy shower over his high-collared coat.

"Delightful, indeed," said Mr. Montgomery ironically, as he shook the wet from his feet, and expressed his thankfulness, in a murmuring voice, that Miss Johnstone had not squeezed him to a mummy.

Even the good-natured General began to regret his having accepted the invitation, when he looked around on the formidable circle to each member of which Mr. Lazenby was taking his daughter, while he introduced her in the following terms:—Lady Mac Call—Miss Falkland. Is she not a fair bride? You will soon know one another better I hope. Miss Mac Call—oh! you are already acquainted. We shall soon see her a bride, I hope, too. Mr. Simson, likely to become a neighbour, I trust. My niece's sons, William—Duncan—Alfred—the fourth not here, not well—Mr. Davidson, the gentleman who attends on their education—Mr. Tulloch, a fine young man, I assure you, lady, said the old gentleman in a whisper, as he led her to the chair; which concluded the row placed in a circular form on one side of the room, and then

departed to go through the same ceremony with the Miss Johnstones and her father. In this, however, he was frustrated by the movement of these ladies, who, fearful of betraying the mud which impaired the lustre of their red and yellow shoes, had shuffled behind a sofa which stood obligingly near the door by which they had entered, and stood, with an air of modest bashfulness, in giant group together.

"Nay, allow me to draw you from your retirement," said the good natured Mr. Lazenby.

"We shall never be introduced to Lady Mac Call if we do not," said one. "She will see our shoes if we do," rejoined another. "I *will* go," said a third; and, by degrees, their scruples were overcome, and Mr. Lazenby placed provokingly three chairs directly opposite the bride, who sat in all the dignity of a stiff white satin, with her head crowned with a wreath of pearls, which Sir Thomas had pronounced to be as chastely beautiful as the wearer.

This compliment, together with the blissful consciousness of being the only "Lady" of the party, had completely reconciled the bride to sitting in a pair of very tight stays in no very comfortable situation, for the space of an hour and a half already. For Sir Thomas always chose to be in time; and Mr. Lazenby was always anxious to have leisure to exhibit his new edition of his works before dinner: while the butler decanted the wines which his own hands had prepared in the morning.

"I expect one other addition to our party yet," said Mr. Lazenby with exultation; "but he has not yet completed his toilette. He is a charming young man, and I was so glad when he accepted my invitation; though I confess I scarcely expected he would. But he is always the same good-natured, obliging, friendly person as ever. His accession to a princely fortune, and exalted title, have not obscured in him those qualities which always adorned his amiable and quiet manner."

Mr. Lazenby spoke with more than usual pomposity, and it was evident he derived no small gratification from the fact of entertaining a man of rank in his house. But the name remained a mystery; so shrouded were his intellects in the fact of speaking of so much greatness, that he forgot to communicate the name which he had not ceased to repeat for many days previous with proud anticipation. The expectation of this unknown guest for a while arrested the discussion of his usual favorite topic. But the sight of a large round table, in the middle of a room, covered with prints and books laid open for inspection, arrested the attention of Miss Johnstone, who, glad of an opportunity to discover to the company her love of the fine arts, and, perhaps, also of exhibiting her own album, began to make inquiry as to their contents, and to request permission to inspect them.

"They are, my dear Madam," said Mr. Lazenby, advancing towards the table, "the copies of my last edition. You have, doubtless, read my *Inagonia*; but no one has yet seen this copy. Have you read my thirty-fourth chapter? I make all my young men read my thirty-fourth chapter. The last treatise on the management of that race of animals to be met with in Britain, or out of Britain;" so saying, he handed several copies round the room, and stood in breathless expectation of the admiration which would doubtless follow.

"Beautiful," said Lady Mac Call, rising to replace it on the table in much dread that the printing on the outside, of a huge pig, might tarnish the gloss of her new gown and white gloves.

"Very pretty, indeed," simpered Miss Mac Call, as she handed the copy she held to her lover.

Mrs. Stewart's shoes were heard, as she arose with her usual hasty step, from playing the civil to the bride, and placed herself beside Margaret. "I am very glad, my dear that you are come—I almost fear

ed that you would not do so when Lord Ormiston was to be here; for I know there was some disagreement between you once."

Margaret started, and her color changed. Had she heard aright? and if she had,—why was she startled? She almost wondered that this name should have power to disturb her composure.

But she attributed this to the connexion of other remembrances, and felt a redoubled reason for concealing the cause of her surprise. "I am astonished," she said, "that he did not write to acquaint my father of his intention of being in this country: but I have no doubt he intended to afford us a pleasant surprise."

"Very likely, my dear," said Mrs. Stewart; "but I wonder why they don't bring dinner—I suppose Jacob thinks we must wait for Lord Ormiston:" as she spoke the door opened, and Margaret felt as if scarcely able to look up, when she was relieved by the sound of Mr. Lazenby's voice, who in reply to that which the servant had whispered, exclaimed, "What, no fish? never can get fish in this country, I suppose, because we are so near the sea—Sir Thomas's house, which is at least five miles further, is always well supplied—Well! at least however, we have got some—only takes *three* quarters of an hour to boil—shall we wait? I will consult voices—Lady Mac Call—shall we wait?"

"Oh not for me, if you please, Sir," replied the blushing dame. "Dr. Morrice won't let me eat fish."

"Miss Mac Call?"

"No I thank you, Sir, I prefer flesh meat." Lady Mac Call blushed deeper still at her step-daughter's vulgarity; and whispered to her to say butcher meat the next time

"And you, Miss Margaret?"

"Oh pray do not wait for me, Mr. Lazenby?" said she smiling. Mr. Montgomery pulled out his watch in a corner, and mumbled it was past seven o'clock

General Falkland, and the rest of the company, declared their indifference as to having fish or not.

"Ah!" said Mr. Lazenby. "Every one for fish; yes, dress the fish then—and hark ye Jacob—remember to hand round some of the ——— after the curry."

A dead pause ensued, as the butler closed the door. Mr. Lazenby had struck despair into the hearts of his hungry guests; but he seemed well provisioned, with gazing on the prints which ornamented his work, and in the expectation of the guest whom he expected with eagerness. At length the door opened, and Lord Ormiston appeared; there was much bridling of neck, and resting of gowns among the Miss Johnstones, who as they heard his name pronounced, spread their silk garments in such a manner as might best conceal the shoes which occasioned them more distress than the unsightly heads which more easily appalled the eyes of others.

Mr. Montgomery had compared them to Robin Hood, and Little John, and Friar Tuck; and his favorable opinion had not much increased from the lengthened opportunity afforded him of further observation of their charms. But he was now more engaged in the more agreeable occupation of renewing his acquaintance with Lord Ormiston, for whom he had acquired a partiality, which the kindness of Evelyn had almost increased into friendship; and observing a degree of awkwardness in his manner, as he retreated from Margaret, after his salutation; he was glad to join the group which was formed around him by the General and Mr. Lazenby and Mrs. Stewart, that he might the better convince himself of the justice of those good wishes, which he had often made in his behalf; and satisfy his curiosity as to the reason of his not making Walrond Castle, as usual, his head quarters in that neighborhood.

"I had intended," said Gilbert, in reply to the reproach which General Falkland was playfully bestow-



ing on him, "daily to write to you; but one thing after another hurried me to the last moment, and I then hoped I might give you a surprise, which might not prove altogether an unpleasant one to you." He put an emphasis on the last words, which General Falkland failed not to remark, and his face assumed a melancholy expression, as he continued: "I should not certainly have gone abroad, as is my present intention, without visiting you; and thought Mr. Lazenby's kind invitation would enable me to prepare you for my intended intrusion." Margaret heard each word he spoke, for the attention of the rest of the company was so divided between admiration at the entry of so great a man, and longings for the arrival of dinner, that all were united—even Sir Thomas Mac Call desisted awhile from enlarging on the extent and benefits of his property, to lament the eclipse in which he feared Evelyn's entry had placed him: and she was, therefore, fully able to appreciate all that was said by the person who, at that moment, interested her more than she could have imagined it in his power to do.

It is, perhaps, a fair way of deciding on the nature of feelings, undefined to the mind of her who experiences them, to meet one with regard to whom we stand in doubt unexpectedly. The heart warms at the voice of friendship—the eye rests gladly on the form of a friend; but she who trembles at the sight of him who loves her, and fears to meet the eye which seeks hers, with the anxiety of a dearer hope, may dread in that tremulous pulsation a tenderer interest than she has hitherto been willing to allow.

Margaret would not thus, however, determine the cause of an emotion which she felt angry with herself for experiencing: and inwardly resolved to overcome an anxiety, for which she could scarcely deem the occasion sufficient, she took smilingly the arm of Sir Thomas Mac Call, as he offered it with an air of gracious condescension; and followed by Lady Mac Call and Mr. Lazenby, into the drawing-room.

Contrary to her expectations, Evelyn was not placed beside her; but, much to her uneasiness, he sat immediately opposite to her, by the side of Miss Mac Call, who, notwithstanding her desire to please so fine a young man as she deemed Lord Ormiston, was too much engaged by her faithful Mrs. Simson to admit of her paying him those attentions she wished. Evelyn was therefore at liberty to indulge his inclinations in gazing on the object of his fervent admiration, and he again rejoiced in that presence, from which he had once thought himself for ever debarred; and which now, under a sense of his hopeless attachment, and the duty which bade him relinquish his hopes to one whose love she returned, he was resolved to fly from, and to seek in new scenes that forgetfulness which hitherto he had failed to find. A gloom hung on his countenance, which Margaret could not but observe, though he strove to assume cheerfulness, in reply to the numerous attentions which he received, not only from his kind hostess, but from many of the guests, who rivalled one another in their attempts to draw him into conversation with themselves. The timidity with which Margaret replied to the few sentiments he ventured to address to her, he attributed to her rivetted determination to avoid any renewal of familiarity; and he longed for an opportunity to withdraw his hated presence, as he deemed it, from her sight, that, unseen and in solitude, he might think of that loveliness, which seemed to him increased by the pensive tenderness which sat on her countenance, though he thought that pensiveness was engaged with the remembrance of his more fortunate rival.

Sir Thomas Mac Call made several endeavors to remind Miss Falkland of the great loss she had incurred in rejecting his proposals, by entering with more than usual eagerness on the increased size of his property—of the large additions he had made to his house, to which he said that the late proprietor's had been but a mouse cage.

Margaret wondered why she felt so uneasy lest Lord Ormiston should overhear him; and scarcely knew what she said, as she replied, she did not doubt it.

Sir Thomas chuckled with delight.—“No: I have somewhat better means than he had, certainly—so no one need be astonished; but I think some folks will see their mistake, when they have got over their pride sufficiently to see and judge for themselves.”

So thought Evelyn—she had never yet been to that house; and he was prevented, by Mr. Lazenby addressing him, from hearing her reply, as she said that she had been unfortunate in not finding Lady Mac Call at home when she had called there.

Margaret was glad to turn from her self-sufficient companion to Mr. Davidson the tutor of Mr. Stewart's sons, who sat beside her, though neither his attitude nor manner were peculiarly elegant; she hoped, from the nature of his situation in that house, to find him endowed with some superiority of mind. His appearance was certainly no more in his favor than were the first words with which he addressed her. With eyes sunk within a low and contracted forehead, he glanced suspiciously around, as if giving little credit to the object of his observations for much that was amiable; and the sallow hue of his emaciated face never changed, when he bestowed a saturnine smile on those whom he addressed. With each hand thrust into his pocket, and sitting with his back fixed to his chair, he gave little evidence of his love of occupation with those who sat about him, and his empty plate occasioned the gentle remark of his companion when she said,—

“I fear, Mr. Davidson, you are not well, as you eat nothing.”

“Very well, madam, I thank you—perfectly well, and much better than those who spend their precious hours in nothing but feeding the body.”

"To give nourishment to the more intellectual part of our nature is certainly more agreeable occupation," rejoined Margaret, smiling; "but the other is necessary too, whilst we inhabit these frail tenements;" and she smiled sportingly, as she looked around on the sorry attempts at dressed dishes which Mr. Lazenby's ill-tutored cook had assembled together, as if to prevent the indulgence of deriving pleasure in this grovelling occupation.

"Beg your pardon, ma'am," rejoined Mr. Davidson,— "quite unnecessary, except in a very small degree. Moderation I hold to be one of the cardinal virtues; and I am glad to say that I have learnt to practise it. One potatoe a-day I find to be quite sufficient to keep me in life, and my studies are now freed from the incumbrance of a surfeited stomach, from which I used to suffer so much."

Margaret could scarcely suppress a smile, when she looked at his thin wan visage, which she could not but apprehend to be the result of such abstinence, but hoped to find something more entertaining in the insanity of her companion than she was enabled to discover. The littleness which actuated his judgment she found to preside over all his other opinions, and she was more amused by the very evident weakness of her old friend, Mr. Lazenby, as he discoursed, with lengthened phrase, on each bottle of mixture denominated wine, which stood round his table, adorned with a necklace of white paper, on which he had, according to his fancy, inscribed the names of divers rare and foreign wines, but which were, in fact, the result of his laborious distillations from the currants, gooseberries, and other fruits of his garden. "Some Aleatico, my dear Lord Ormiston, I pray you taste my Aleatico. It has all the rich fragrance of the grape—all the sweetness of the climate which produces it. But perhaps that will suit the ladies better, and you may prefer some of the Johannisberg. Is it not refreshing?"

Lord Ormiston bowed. Wood-vinegar was a joke to the sour draught thus forced on him.

Fortunately for him, Sir Thomas entered on a long discussion on the comparative merits of his hock, with that of his host; and he employed this leisure moment in listening to the music of his beloved one's voice, as she spoke to the ill-favored, but obsequious, Mr. Davidson. With the desert, two little girls, of singularly ugly appearance, made their entry, and placing themselves on each side of Mrs Stewart, who bestowed on them sundry pledges of her maternal love, gave evidence how entirely their affections were fixed on the oranges, and dried fruits, which were the cause of their thus favoring the company. Sir Thomas called them pretty sweet creatures, and asked his blushing Lady what she would give to have two such little dears. "Time enough, my dear," added he complacently, and her smiles were restored. And she begged leave to take one on her knee, to shew what a good nurse she was. "Your youngest I think, Mrs. Stewart?" Yes, rejoined Mr. Lazenby, making a motion of silence—"Don't speak to her, my dear Lady, of that—poor Mr. Stewart died a few days before her birth." Mrs. Stewart really looked melancholy, and a few minutes after gave sign to the ladies to retire to the drawing-room.

Lord Ormiston flew to open the door, and he fancied, was it but a fancy? that, as Margaret passed him, she gave him a faint smile.

It was something to catch the returning air through which she passed, to gaze upon the undulating wave of her graceful step, to hear the soft accents of her voice, as she thanked him; in short to have but seen her once again, was a joy which intoxicated him; and, when he returned once more to the gentlemen, he thought the time would never end which detained him from her presence; and scarcely knew how to take a part in the very uninteresting conversation which followed.

Margaret's thoughts were perhaps not less confused, but they were happier: she read in that amiable countenance a devotedness of interest undiminished by her own past unkindness—a fervour of admiration by which she could not but be flattered; and a melancholy, which endeared his affection to her heart; and made her wonder why she did not love him: she thought of the days of their happy childhood, when the mildness of his temper, and his ready alacrity to oblige her on every occasion, had made him the favorite of her hours of recreation, and beguiled those of their mutual studies. But, she was aroused from this reverie by the voice of Mrs. Stewart, who after telling her how much she knew of the superiority of her mind, and the pleasure she derived in watching the improvement of youthful minds, requested her to follow her out to the school-room. “I dare say,” said she, “my dear, you observed that my three boys were in the drawing-room before dinner—That was to teach them good manners, and I always give them a long half hour to learn manners; they are so essential to young men.”

Margaret smiled, and could not refrain from thinking the lesson was given at the expense of comfort to her guests; “but, now,” continued Mrs. Stewart, “you shall see them in their element with their books, and their problems.—They positively love study—it is a recreation to them.”

So saying she seized a taper, and, marching out of the room, led the way through several dark passages, to the school-room, while Margaret followed, her thoughts, truth to say, little intent on those whom she was about to visit.

When Mrs. Stewart opened the school room door, the mingled fumes of a tallow candle just dying away in its paper socket, with those from three tumblers which had contained ale, and of which part was in one corner spilled upon the table, greeted the senses of

Margaret, and a loud snore issuing from the nose of the oldest boy, who was sleeping with his head upon the table, awoke in her mind a passing doubt as to the high repute in which they held those studies which they were persuaded to believe was as much their inclination as their duty.

The second boy was smoking a piece of brown paper which he had converted into the shape of a pipe; and the third, more lively than the rest, was just in the act of injecting with a syringe some beer into the ear of his sleeping brother, when the noise of the door opening, arrested his purpose, and, forgetting that he had exchanged the long tailed coat, with which he appeared in the drawing-room, for his old morning jacket, he attempted to push it into a pocket which did not exist; but which, by the aid of a hole in his trowsers, he contrived partially to conceal near the back part of his person. Poor Mrs. Stewart looked much disconcerted.

"My dear, misguided boys," she said, "I brought my friend hither to shew her children whom I thought I might be proud of; but I grieve to see the love of study declining in your minds, and that of folly taking its place. Why did not the servant remove your supper, and bring you fresh light—This is disgraceful, but it shall not occur again."

The boys looked very stupid, but the eldest, as he awoke, sullenly pulled his Greek grammar before him, and resumed his reading; the second threw his pipe under the table, and the third, retiring backwards to hide the protruding instrument of his late amusement, attempted to sit down, and was much relieved when he found it impossible, by his mother saying, "I will not return to you, this evening, boys—and am ashamed of you."

When Margaret again found herself in the passage, poor Mrs. Stewart soon found many happy excuses with which to conceal the defeat of her maternal vanity,

and the shameful conduct of her sons, and Margaret was really glad she did so, as she was vexed for the mortification of her kind friend.

When they returned to the drawing-room the gentlemen were already there, and Margaret perceived the eye of Evelyn watching anxiously for her approach. Miss M'Call was requested to sing, and she favored the company with several "sweet little Scotch airs," which the Misses Johnstone gathered round her to listen to, and which they followed by music of their own. Margaret was relieved by finding this exhibition much superior to that of their painting, and it was with real pleasure that she listened to the airs of Gilderoy, "The Flowers of the Forest," and other national airs, sung in parts, by voices true and melodious in song, though far otherwise in speech.

She also was requested to sing, but she felt it impossible to comply. She was vexed almost to tears at the coldness of Gilbert's manner towards her. Few words had passed between them. Those words had not been of any interest, and he appeared to dread being alone with her. I shall not be the first to seek him, thought she; and she was almost relieved when General Falkland ordered the carriage, and when she found herself bidding 'good night' to her host and hostess. Mr. Lazenby gave her his arm, and she had therefore no opportunity to say any farther than 'good night' to Lord Ormiston, to which he replied with a melancholy air, as he watched her receding form. Lady M'Call had promised to put the Misses Johnstone home, and she felt it a relief to have none with her but her father and Mr. Montgomery as they drove home.

"How ill my dear Evelyn looks," said General Falkland, as they drove on.

"I fear," said Mr. Montgomery, pettishly, "his sojourn at Lazenby will not make him look much better. Did ever folk taste such wine? Perfect poison!"



"Certainly not good," said General Falkland, smiling, "but I trust his good looks will not long be impaired from that cause, for I have made him promise to come and see me, soon."

Margaret rejoiced, but said nothing.

"Were you not glad, dearest," said her father, "to see our good kind friend again?"

"Yes;" said Margaret, "but I think it rather odd in him to prefer Mr. Lazenby to you."

"Oh, I know why he did that," rejoined her father, "only to give us an agreeable surprise, and I hope, dear, you will not make him think it an unpleasant one."

"Heigh-ho!" said Mr. Montgomery, yawning. "What a work you great folk have wi' your jinketting and visiting; nine miles to go and come for a dinner that would make a whole man sick; and then to meet such a set of tawpies on the road, and to see siccan monsters as they had in that red book; I would like to sleep, but really fear my visions will be haunted by their Highland lads and lasses."

Margaret laughed; but her father was generally silent when others were criticised. So Mr. Montgomery fulfilled his intentions in falling asleep, and, the good old General following his example, Margaret was soon left to pursue her own meditations in silence, and though she did not dream, she certainly thought, of Evelyn.

## CHAPTER XIV.

"To morrow brings a change—a total change!"

COWPER.

It needs more than an ordinary share of philosophy, in the hour of intense personal anxiety, to appear occupied in the petty interests of a fanciful mind with whom we have little congeniality.

That heart may well blame itself for disgraceful egotism that can lend its attentive sympathy to aught that affects the concerns of others, when they relate to the sufferings or enjoyment of their feelings, even when the most distressing or the most blissful circumstances of their lives engage their contemplations, but who can resist impatience when called upon to gaze with attention on matters, at all times indifferent, as if they were of the deepest importance, or dilate on trivial taste and pursuits, foreign to the natural disposition, when every energy of the mind is employed in the consideration of matters of the highest moment with regard to our well-being, and the heart throbs with eager pulsations for its dearest happiness.

Poor Evelyn needed such philosophy, and lamented its deficiency, when, on the day following that which brought him once more into the presence of his beloved, he was summoned by Mr. Lazenby to attend him through the numerous buildings, yards, &c., which he had erected for the convenience of his favorite animals, and on which, book in hand, he was condemned to hear his friend dilate with more than his usual prolonged strain of eloquence.

The promise which the good natured old man had made him, in the morning, of accompanying him that day on a visit to Walrond Castle was every hour losing

its likelihood of being fulfilled; and when, at length, Evelyn ventured to suggest that the day was wearing on, and that they had better prepare for their intended ride; he found that the inspection of the piggery had so far encroached on the prescribed time that it was impossible to undertake anything farther on that day; and, abandoning himself to his fate, he continued to listen to his loquacious old friend as, with redoubled energy, he renewed his favorite topic, nor relinquished it till the dressing-bell summoned them to prepare for dinner. How differently did poor Gilbert endure the fatigue of this hour from what he had done on the preceding day! Still, however, it was something to recollect that beautiful from so lately in the very spot now occupied by one of Mrs. Stewart's boys. For, on this day, they were all permitted to dine with the company. It was something to dwell upon those accents he had so lately heard; when, in the intervals of Mr. Lazenby's conversation, he still fancied he might catch the gentle tones of her loved voice; and, hoping that the morrow might enable him once more to behold her, he undaeavored to rally his spirits, and render himself as agreeable as he could to his kind host and hostess.

But the morrow, alas, disappointed his hopes. The rain poured down in torrents, and though he would have gladly braved the inclemency of the weather, to gain one sight of her who occupied his every thought, he was dissuaded from the attempt by the fear of incurring her displeasure, by betraying an anxiety which she had, as he thought, by her manner, led him to be convinced was vainly entertained; and he was, therefore, compelled by his own fears to spend another long and weary day in listening to the strictures of his hostess on young men's education, and in the alternate lectures of his host on pigs and foreign wines.

The next day, though bright and sunny, a hard frost set in; and Lord Ormiston heard Mr. Lazenby declare

at breakfast the utter impossibility of riding on the slippery roads. This time, however, he was determined that inclination should triumph over eivility; and he succeeded in obtaining a horse on which to proceed to Walrond Castle. Evelyn could not, indeed, regret the prudence which made Mr. Lazenby absent himself from so perilous a ride, as he contrived, notwithstanding the many precautions of his friends, to put his horse to no lagging pace as soon as he got out of hearing of his repeated expostulations not so break his neck by hard riding; and, with a beating heart, soon found himself within the precincts of Walrond Castle.

With what different feelings had he last beheld each beloved object which now met his eyes, and which were alike endeared to him by past associations of enjoyment and mournful regret! The trees were now stripped of the foliage which adorned them when he last bade adieu to these dear scenes; and, instead of the golden fruits which weighed down their clustering branches, he now saw nothing but the grey mantle of winter over every object; and, yet, though no better ground of hope to cheer him than when all nature smiled around, and all within was desolate, he felt, he knew not why—a throb of anticipated happiness, as he drew near to that presence which was the sunshine of his heart; and though he could not analyze the cause of his exultation of feeling, he experienced for a moment that blissful dream which is sometimes given to youth even in the darkest hour, as if to preserve the heart from the recklessness of despair.

His old friend's favorite greyhounds leaped upon him when they heard his voice; and tears almost came to his eyes as he caressed them, in awaiting the answer to the bell, while he stood in breathless anxiety at the castle gate.

The servant greeted him with looks of respectful kindness, and a voice of welcome, the sincerity of which he could not doubt, but in its tone there was a

melancholy which sent a foreboding of evil to his heart, and, with anxious eagerness he asked if all was well.

"I am sorry to inform you, my Lord," said the good old servant, "that my master is dangerously ill."

Lord Ormiston's face turned deadly pale. "Good heavens, John—when—what is the nature of his illness? I saw him two days ago in perfect health;" and he would have inquired for Margaret, but her name choked him, and he could not utter it.

John understood him, however, and quickly replied, "my young lady is well, but in the deepest distress. The General was taken ill on the night when your Lordship saw him at Lazenby-hall. He has two physicians in attendance, and they have pronounced his complaint to be inflammation in the chest, and are much alarmed for the result. But stay, sir," continued the kind old servant, "I will let Miss Margaret know you are here, she will see you, I am sure. At any rate, will you go to the drawing-room, and Mr. Mac Farlane will attend you."

As he spoke, Mr. Mac Farlane appeared, and grasping the hand of Evelyn with affectionate welcome, the tears stood in his eyes, as he said, "Come in my dear lord, this is an hour of much trial to us all; but,"——

"I trust, my dear sir, you are more alarmed than the danger warrants. Is he really so ill as you fear?"

Mr. Mac Farlane shook his head; and then proceeded to detail the circumstances of his illness, which sent a chill through Gilbert's heart, and for some time prevented him from giving utterance to his anxiety to hear more of his beloved.

He had scarcely forced himself to mention her, with a voice choked by emotion, when she entered the room.

Her countenance bespoke her agitation; and, attired in a loose morning gown, in which she had watched all night by the side of her parent, with her long curls

fastened carelessly at the back of her head, Evelyn, even at that moment, could not refrain from wondering at her beauty—she spoke in a whisper, as if fearing that she was still within reach of disturbing the invalid. But, as she did so, the effort to appear composed was suddenly impeded; and as she received the nervous pressure of her lover's hand, her face flushed crimson, and she burst into tears. When she recovered, "He is better," she said, "a little better, I trust, for he has fallen asleep. I cannot stay here; but promise me," said she, looking steadfastly at Evelyn, for again the thought of her father had banished every other, "promise me that you will not leave this house till—" she could say no more, but with a hurried and noiseless step, left the room.

There was happiness, even in that moment of deep anxiety, to the faithful heart of Evelyn, "I leave this house!" exclaimed he. "No—what could tempt me to do so?" And scarcely had he spoken, when, seizing a pen, he wrote a few lines to Mr. Lazenby, to acquaint him with the cause of his detention, and, having despatched it, seated himself by the side of Mr. Mac Farlane, in silent anxiety.

Three days were spent in awful suspense by the inhabitants of Walrond Casale. The unfailing kindness, the well-directed benevolence of such a father, and master, and friend, as General Falkland, had endeared him, in no ordinary degree, to all who came within his influence; and the genuine sympathy which pervaded the bosom of every inmate and neighbor of his house gave convincing proof of the high estimation in which he was held, when sickness threatened to remove him from a world in which he was alike useful and beloved.

When Margaret found herself again in the presence of Lord Ormiston, she had schooled herself to control the emotion of her heart; and, fearing to render herself unable to appear in her father's presence with that

composure which she wished to assume, she never again allowed herself to give way to the feelings which agonised her heart. This effort served to fill poor Evelyn's mind with a dread of seeming to intrude his own wishes at such a moment, and to convince him more and more of their hopelessness. He heard her indeed speak to him as a friend in whom she trusted; but there was nothing in her manner to warrant the slenderest expectation of her favoring any dearer hope; and it was therefore with increased melancholy that he awaited the issue of an event which her fears, and the opinion of his physicians, led him to apprehend from the dangerous nature of General Falkland's illness; and it was with sad forbodings that he entered with Mr. Mac Farlane on a consultation as to the necessity of writing to Lady de Tracey, to acquaint her with their present fears, and their cause.

The delicacy of her health, and the distance to which she was removed from her home, occasioned many a doubt; but when, after several days, the increasing weakness of General Falkland deprived even the most sanguine of all hope of his recovery, he wrote, in terms as guarded as he could, to entreat Lord de Tracey, if possible, to hasten to Scotland, for the sake of one whose health was gradually sinking under the intensity of her anxiety.

Scarcely had he despatched this letter, when Margaret entered the room where he was sitting in silence and in solitude. His thoughts wandering between earth and heaven; his broken prayers now ascending in behalf of the aged sufferer; now mingling with dreams of vague, but inexpressible hope, and purer and more disinterested intercessions in behalf of that being whose sorrow agonised his heart. His face was buried in his hands, and her tread was so light that he started when she spoke, though her tones were gentle and subdued.

"Lord Ormiston," she said, "you have been to us a kind and faithful friend, and my father is grateful to

you, as I am, believe me. He has just heard that you have been here ever since his illness, and wishes now to see you.—Do you feel equal to mastering your emotion when you shall behold him changed as he is from what you saw him so lately? If so—will you follow me?”

Evelyn promised, and, with faltering steps and a trembling heart, followed her to the sick chamber. It was evening, and, fortunately for Evelyn, the early darkness was only relieved by a solitary taper, which stood on a table at some distance from the bed on which General Falkland was lying. “Welcome, my more than son, my dear, my excellent Evelyn,” said the languid voice of the kind old man. He stretched out his withered hand, which Evelyn grasped affectionately. “I dare not speak much,” continued he—“it might shorten my few remaining hours; but I wished to give you my blessing, should I die this night, which I fear ——— for my dear children’s sake only.” Evelyn ventured to whisper the hope which he could not yet relinquish, though he feared the worst.

“Well, my dear boy, God’s time is the best. Thanks be to him I am ready—write to Susan—give her a father’s best blessing—tell Lord de Tracey to love and cherish her as she deserves—Margaret, my beloved, where are you?”

“Here, dearest father,” said the suppressed voice of the weeping girl, who stood behind the curtain, vainly endeavoring to repress her emotion.

“Blessings on you.”—He could say no more. The weakness which he had surmounted, in the hopes of speaking, in the presence of his beloved child, had triumphed over the affectionate eagerness of his mind; and he sunk exhausted back. Evelyn and Margaret stood beside him in breathless silence. She laid her hand upon his heart—it beat, though feebly. “He sleeps,” said she, “thanks be to God.” The physician was called in. “If he awakes refreshed, he may



yet recover," said he. The revulsion of feeling from despair to hope was too much for Margaret; and she was carried senseless in the arms of her lover to another chamber.

With returning consciousness, the sense of new calls to duty aroused her once more to repress her feelings; and, having so far acceded to the wishes of her friends as to recline on a couch by her father's bed, she lay down with waking eyes, and a throbbing heart, while she seemed to rest.

## CHAPTER XV.

Even now  
Thou art lovelier to me in thy cold severity,  
Flying me—leaving me without a joy,  
Without a hope on earth, without myself;  
Thou art lovelier now than if thy yielding soul  
Had smiled on me a passionate consent—  
So! for I see thy parting homeward look,  
Go in thy beauty.

MILMAN.

It was well for poor Susan that the news of a Father's danger and a sister's anguish was not suffered to reach her ears till circumstances, which at the same time, threatened the safety of her own life, were so ordered as to enable her to hear it with calmness; and to await the disposal of an all wise Providence, strengthening her to obey a summons which she heard with all the deep emotion of a warm and devoted heart. Trials multiplied around her path, and difficulties, arising out of the deceitful malice of an artful woman; the mistaken guidance of an erring husband—and the vehement passions of an unfortunate being, whose attachment to her was the cause of their mutual sorrow, impaired for awhile the mildness of her resignation: and rendered her the prey to feelings of wretchedness and despair, from which she sighed for the hour of death to relieve her.

Alas! there are moments, when the most religious fortitude yields to the government of nature's overwhelming violence, and if there be one over which compassion may frame a weeping excuse for the frailty of humanity, it is when the sufferer is overcome at the same time by mental and bodily anguish; when there is no human ear present, in which we may pour out our sorrows: and when, through the blindness of nature, we deem it best for the recovery of a soul, which

we value, that death should free us from the power of giving offence! In such a state did poor Susan find herself, when, after the marriage of Lord Frederick and Constance, they left Florence on an expedition to Lucca. Mrs. Vavasoni returned to England, accompanied by a friend; and she found herself once more in a foreign land, neglected by her only protector, and the sport of envious and ill-natured tongues, busy in circulating tales which served daily to alienate the heart of Lord de Tracey more and more from her.

Susan now withdrew herself entirely from all intercourse with society, in order that the secluded tenour of her harmless life might at least secure her from that scandal with which she knew the ear of her husband to be daily assailed; and when he reproached her for this, as symptomatic of a discontented disposition, she freely told him the reason of her thus acting—bade him ask his own conscience whether he had not listened to anecdotes relative to her own conduct, which she could prove to be false; and entreated him to permit her to withdraw from the possibility of suspicion, by a life of total retirement.

The mind of Lord de Tracey was totally perverted by the influence under which he had suffered himself so long to be led; and though he did not believe the assertion of his innocent wife, he bade her act as she thought proper; but to beware how she trifled with him. It was in vain that Susan sought an explanation. This was always avoided, and, with a heavy heart she endeavored to resume those occupations which had hitherto served to beguile her weary hours; and, giving strict injunction to her servants to admit none within her door whom she did not specially invite, she continued to await with patience the return of better days, yet, almost despairing of this, would sometimes sigh for the hour which was to relieve her from suffering, and pray that her death might be the means of reclaiming her ill-advised husband.

One morning having driven to the Corsini Palace, to gaze on one of her favorite pictures, she stopped before it with her pencil in her hand, to copy the features, on which she loved to dwell, of the Paccia of Carlo Dolce.—There was a quiet which pervaded the spacious chambers of that Palace, which soothed her feelings, and, while the almost more than earthly inspiration breathed into the glowing canvass which she gazed at, inspired her with thoughts, refreshing and consolatory, she almost forgot that minutes glided into hours; and that the day, already far advanced, found her still alone within those walls, while the busy world were thronging the streets in all the gaiety of an Italian Carnival.

She looked at the watch which hung round her neck. It was three in the afternoon; but her drawing was still unfinished—"A few more strokes," she said to herself. "How one may dream away life, and forget to seize its opportunities!" The reflection pleased her; and, though weak and tired, she continued to touch the sketch she had made with lively strokes, until, spent with the attitude in which she had been placed so long, she leaned back on her chair, and closed her eyes. When she again opened them, the tall figure of a man in a black domino stood before her—she started in alarm. Then, in courteous phrase, besought her visiter not to regard her as an object of sport; adding, in Italian, that she was a foreigner—and invalid, and had no wish to enter into the amusements of the day, though she wished he might find gayer friends in other scenes. She was proceeding to take up her sketch, with the pencils which were scattered around her, and had fallen as she rose, when the stranger laid his hand upon hers, and, kneeling at her feet, said, in a low tone, "Oh, Susan! will you always shun me?" The voice was Hamilton's, and she trembled with mingled dread, anger, and regret.

The hand he had taken was withdrawn by a convulsive effort, as she said, "It ill agrees with those professions of friendship which you have made to me and mine, thus to insult a lonely and defenceless woman. Leave me, Mr. Hamilton, and expose me not to the suspicions of menials by such unseemly conduct."

"Insult you! Leave you! Oh, Susan, could I insult the being for whom I have spent years of devoted—hopeless—despairing love?—insult you who are the paragon of purity—of more than angel loveliness of heart and life. Leave you!—who are left by him who should be the proudest of his sex. No, Susan; I cannot obey you. You do not, you cannot think so—"

"Hold," said Susan, who, spite of her wish instantly to retire from the place to which her weakness had chained her, was arrested also by the fear of issuing from the palace, in presence of those whose suspicions might prove injurious to her character, and place her unfortunate lover in danger of her husband's revenge. "Think not to flatter me, weak though you may deem me, by the language of an admiration, which the voice of inclination and of duty alike bid me shun. Think not to win encouragement from my past good will to listen to reproaches against him whom I am bound to love and to honor, and of whom I shall never suffer one word of disparagement to pollute my ears."

"Stay, Susan," said the imploring voice of Hamilton, as, throwing aside his mask, he grasped her hand convulsively, so that she could not withdraw it. "Stay; by the memory of our past love." He gazed with passionate intensity on her countenance. It was deadly pale, and he thought by that word he had triumphed over her resolution. "Yes, Susan, by the memory of our long concealed, wretched, but devoted love, you must hear me." Tears gushed to his eyes. Poor Susan was moved; but she was resolute—resolute in the strength which holy and virtuous aspirations brought her in an hour when the past was thus vividly recalled

to her imagination, when all the tenderness of her woman's nature was invoked—in a moment when she had just been lamenting the coldness and neglect of a husband whom she had married without loving, and who had deserved by his conduct to forfeit her affection.

In the involuntary silence which followed Hamilton's passionate appeal, and for which he hoped some word of kindness would succeed, Susan gathered voice to speak the solemn words which for ever extinguished the mistaken hopes of her unfortunate lover.—“With the past I have nothing to do; nor can you dare to lay a claim to my confessing that which was never breathed to mortal ear. But by the vows which I have sworn before my God, at his altar, I will preserve the faith which I have given to another, inviolable. My husband is now the only earthly being who has a right to demand my confidence—the only one who shall ever obtain it. Depart, I entreat you. Pray that you may be enabled to overcome a passion which it is sin to nourish, and far more sinful to disclose to the ears of a wife. Depart, not only hence, but forever, from a presence which may be hurtful to you; and may God bless you, and direct you in the only path which can give you happiness.”

“Angel, farewell!” said the broken voice of the astonished Hamilton. While that choked his utterance, he still held her hand, looked once on a countenance whose uplifted and now streaming eyes seemed to him beautified with more than mortal loveliness, and then hurried from the chamber, and was soon, unobserved, among the numerous figures similarly attired, through which he made his way to that solitude in which alone he could bury his wretchedness.

It was about two months after the occurrence of this painful scene, that Susan, returning one day from a solitary walk in the neighborhood of Florence, was suddenly arrested by the sound of the Duomo bell tolling in slow and melancholy intervals; she had often heard

that sound before, but had never thought of enquiring its cause. On this occasion, it struck her, she knew not why, with a peculiar feeling of sadness, and, turning to the servant who followed her with the carriage, she enquired its meaning. "Oh, merely some sick person," rejoined the *laquais de place*.

He then acquainted her with that beautiful custom of his noble countrymen, to search out, in the disguise of priests, the distresses of their poor brethren, and to relieve them accordingly; and of the custom, when any one was found sick or distressed, who had not friends to succour them, to summon, by the means of this bell, a certain number of this charitable company to their relief and assistance.

Susan mused with grateful complacency on the goodness and benignity which still throws a halo over the ruins of humanity, but there was something in the sound of that bell which haunted her, and when she lay down to rest, fatigued with her walk, she dreamed of church-yards and burials, and thought she saw the shadowy form of her youthful brother beckoning to her to depart, while a soft voice whispered peace in her ear. She awoke with a start; her husband was beside her; his face wore an expression of sorrow, but there was in that sorrow a softness which she loved to behold, and, taking his hand with gentle tenderness, she begged he would tell her why he grieved.

"It is not," said he, "that I lament him, Susan, I never loved him—as a son should do, but when a parent is taken away, I think of the wrongs I have done him, and I lament them."

Susan pressed his hand again. "Is your father, then, gone?" said she.

"He is: he was seized suddenly with a paralytic stroke, which, after a few days of suffering, terminated his existence. . . . Susan it is now time that I should unfold to you what has appeared to you mysterious—the Contesse—"

Susan gave a slight start as he pronounced her name; she looked tremulously at her husband.

"By heavens! Susan, I will bear no reproaches; I have not deserved them; you have—"

"I!" said Susan, with a voice which betrayed the bitterness she felt at his injustice, "Alas! my husband, you have been deceived—"

Lord de Tracey rose from her side, and walked with hasty steps across the room. He struck his hand upon his forehead as if unable to repress the furious passion which agonized him. Susan was terrified at sight of his emotion, but deemed it her part to be silent. At this moment a knock was heard at the door, and a servant put a note into the hands of Lord de Tracey. He read it hastily, then crushing it in his hand, gazed fixedly on his wife, "Susan, forgive me," said he, "I have been violent—perhaps unjust—I must leave you, for Frederick Ashton, who is just returned from Lucca with his bride, wishes to see me; I shall be with you later; God bless you."

He embraced her with a tenderness she had not experienced for many a day, and, overcome by the return of that affection which she felt she deserved, Susan wept, but the tears she shed were welcome tears, and she wished not to deny herself the relief they brought.

Evening came, but Lord de Tracey did not return. Night, but still no message. Poor Susan was, at least, a stranger to the anxiety which his protracted absence would otherwise have occasioned by the approach of that hour of trial, which was to bring on her the joys and cares of a parent. She almost rejoiced that on an occasion of distress, like that which her husband endured in the loss of his only parent, he was spared from witnessing her anguish, and she could scarcely reflect on the length of time which intervened from the moment of her being taken ill to that of the premature birth of a son—that son was alive; and, when



she heard the first faint cry of her first born, the joy depicted by the pen of heavenly inspiration swallowed up every other emotion for a moment, till the renewed tenderness, which that infant voice awoke towards her husband, bade her tremblingly enquire whether he had not yet come home. "He will be here shortly," said her attendants, striving to conceal the anxiety which they all felt.

Lord de Tracey had been sought for at the house of the Contesse de Rambouillet, and at those of all the friends whom he was in the habit of visiting, in vain. He was no where to be found ; and, with mingled anger and distress, the faithful attendants of the beloved Lady de Tracey awaited his return, and strove to disguise from her their anxiety.

## CHAPTER XVI.

"Sweet roses grace the thorny way  
Along this vale of sorrow;  
The flowers that shed their leaves to-day  
Shall bloom again to-morrow."

MONTGOMERY.

"She dares not grudge to leave him there,  
Where to behold him, was her heart's first prayer;  
She dares not grieve, but she must weep,  
As her pale placid martyr sinks to sleep—  
Teaching so well and silently,  
How, at the shepherd's call, the lamb should die;  
How happier far than life—the end  
Of souls that infant-like beneath their burden bend.

KEBLE.

WHEN Susan awoke from the first sleep which refreshed her senses, after the birth of her infant, the first object which met her eyes was the form of her husband kneeling beside her. His hand held her's, which he moistened with his tears; and, as he watched her returning consciousness, she heard him invoke blessings on her head in the tenderest and most fervent accents of love.

At that glad sight, a joy of inexpressible sweetness filled her grateful heart; and she returned the devout aspiration with her gentle voice. "Hush! my angel, my beloved," said Lord de Tracey, while still he wept—"do not fatigue yourself; you must not waste one precious breath on me, not yet—not yet, dearest," added he, gently withdrawing his hand to dry his streaming eyes; and seating himself by her bed-side, with a composure of manner which he found it difficult to assume. He longed to strain that faithful heart to his, and swear, with a truer devotion than he had ever before done, to love her with an undivided heart. And had he not then loved her? Yes, with the passionate fondness of a blind and impetuous feeling, not worthy

of the exalted being whose beauty might well have insured such an admiration; but whose perfect purity of character—whose virtuous principles, purified by temptation and by trial—whose meekness under undeserved reproach—whose long forbearance, under repeated injury and provocation, now stood revealed to his convinced conscience in all her spotless integrity and endearing loveliness; and changed the nature of a blind passion into an affection worthy of the object who claimed it.

Many were the vows he made, by the couch of his sweet sufferer, to spare her in future days from one sigh of bitterness, one tear of regret. Many the resolutions to quell a temper, naturally impetuous, for her sake—to live worthy of so bright, so holy an example; and many the tears of penitence and bitter remorse in the remembrance of those hours of sorrow he had occasioned her by his jealous and unfounded suspicions. As he hung over the cradle of his sleeping infant, Susan listened to his caressing tones with all a mother's gratitude and tenderness; and every past suffering was forgotten in the newly-awakened hopes and interests which the birth of that child had brought to her heart, with the return of her husband's affection, and the unexpected, but welcome and repeated, proofs he gave her of a confidence which he had never shewn till then; and which was the more valuable from the testimony of a blameless conscience, which whispered that it was deserved.

What a delightful task for the generous disinterestedness of such a heart as that of Susan, to endeavor to silence all self-reproach in the mind of him whose present kindness obliterated all that had been contrary in the past from her remembrance; and with what gladness did she spend the moments of her returning strength in proving to her husband that his efforts to be worthy of her love were indeed successful, and that she sought no higher reward to render her happy than his

approval ; but while the delicacy of her affection was appreciated as it deserved by him, who now understood her, Lord de Tracey was too ingenuous to pass over in silence the occasion which he had too often given her for reproaches which she had never bestowed, and while he felt conscious that by his past conduct he had given many just grounds for apprehending the loss of his affection, yet he could with perfect truth assure her that she alone had been the object of his heart's love, although the blindness of a delusive passion for the gaming-table had made him the prey of a designing woman, and rendered him the dupe of a series of false assertions against the character of his blameless wife.

The time was now arrived in which he hoped he might, without injury to her health, relate to her those circumstances which had so much misled him ; and, when Susan was enabled to rise from her sick bed, he asked her one morning to prepare herself to listen to that which he related, with an ingenuous confession of his own errors, and a tenderness of regard for feelings which gave him as much of pain as she experienced, which bound their hearts in tender union, never to be dissolved.

When Lord Frederick Ashton and his bride left Florence on an excursion to Lucca, the former repaired thither with feelings of affectionate solicitude for a friend whom he valued, which not even the happiness of his late union with the object of his heart's love could lessen. There was in his character as little of that besetting sin of humanity as can be found in the heart of selfish man, and although he trusted, entirely, too, in the knowledge he possessed of Lady de Tracey's perfect purity of conduct, yet he was too well acquainted with the history of her early love for Hamilton, and with the temptations she had received by being so often in his society, at a time when her husband's neglect might occasion the renewal of sentiments which

she wished to banish from her recollection, not to feel some alarm for the effect which the sight of such passionate devotion for herself might occasion in her heart; and, though he could not allow himself to give credit to those malicious tales which, through the means of the Contesse de Rambouillet, were circulated among the English in Florence, yet he apprehended much of evil report to her character from their being spread among those who were not sufficiently acquainted with her excellence to repel them.

He was therefore, rejoiced that Hamilton should discover, by the fact of his own marriage, the falsity of those jealous suspicions which he knew to have increased the imprudence of his conduct, when lately in the presence of Lady de Tracey, and he trusted that by the renewal of their intimacy he should be enabled to obtain some influence over his mind, in persuading Hamilton to withdraw from a scene where his presence was hurtful to the woman whom he professed to love.

With this object in view, he determined on shortening his stay at Lucca, and on returning to Florence, where he might, now, without fear of being misunderstood, pursue his friendly and disinterested intention; but, on the day preceding that which he had fixed for his return to Florence, he was startled by the entrance of Hamilton's servant, who, with a countenance expressive of much alarm, entreated him to repair with him to the Hotel where his master lay in agony. He had been seized with a violent fever, and his life was despaired of.

Lord Frederick hesitated not a moment in repairing to attend the invalid. Days of delirium ensued, during which, Lord Frederick listened to the ravings of this unfortunate being as he called on the name of Susan with passionate vehemence—then cursed the Contesse de Rambouillet—then entreated pardon for himself—until, spent with the violence of his actions, he sunk back in death-like exhaustion.

At length the illness took a more favorable turn, and the sense of the unhappy invalid returned. It was then that, with all the energy of his character, he laid open to the astonished ears of Lord Frederick the history of his unfortunate life—of his long concealed love—of the ruin of his fortune—of the hopelessness of his despair when he learnt the truth, as he supposed, of Susan's indifference, by her marriage with Lord de Tracey—of the blind infatuation which had led him to seek her society in Italy, when the news of her unhappiness with her husband had reached his ears—of the dark tissue of falsehoods with which the wicked Contesse had prepared him on his first arrival at Florence for pursuing his unprincipled plan to renew in her heart those sentiments which she had concealed till then—of the many opportunities in which he had vainly sought to tempt her to betray them—and finally, of that in which he had beheld the virtuous triumph of her constancy to duty, even when the struggle he had occasioned in her pure heart was made evident by his unholy vehemence.

It was then that poor Hamilton felt that the illness under which he suffered would probably terminate his miserable existence; and perhaps the hope that it might indeed do so, confirmed the event. It was then that he besought Lord Frederick, if possible, to contrive means to convey him to Florence, that he might seek Lord de Tracey, and with his dying breath implore him to relinquish the pursuit of a passion which had proved so fatal to his happiness; to relinquish the society of a woman whose wickedness had well nigh proved the destruction of an angel's peace; and implore through a husband's means, the forgiveness and the prayers of one whose good will he would earnestly beseech to bless his dying hour.

With much difficulty, the last wish of the unfortunate Hamilton was gratified, through the means of Lord Frederick's kindness and care; and when Lord

de Tracey had received that letter, which had summoned him, on the evening of his child's birth, to attend to a dying man's request, he was destined to behold a sight which rescued him from a danger which had already deeply injured him; but from which the warning voice of an ill-fated victim to its influence was now to save him.

The fatigue of the journey had so much exhausted the strength of Hamilton that, for some time after Lord de Tracey's appearance, he found it impossible to give utterance to that which he labored to unfold. But, making signs to Lord Frederick to repeat that of which he was in possession, he continued to grasp the hand which at first Lord de Tracey seemed to withhold; and, gazing on his face with that imploring earnestness, so deeply affecting when beheld on the countenance of the dying, he seemed as if he had suddenly acquired a supernatural strength, and broke forth in a voice in which the anguish of remorse was heard to beseech man's forgiveness, as he needed that of heaven.

The heart of Lord de Tracey was generous and forgiving. His feelings, which had been powerfully excited to hatred and revenge, when he heard of the baseness of the Contesse, were deeply overpowered at the recital of his wife's wrongs, and softened to admiring tenderness by the faithfulness of her conduct to himself—faithfulness which he felt he had deserved to forfeit; and when with heartfelt emotion he uttered that word of forgiveness, which was so earnestly besought by the dying prayer of Hamilton, he spoke the language of a heart which beat with anguish at the remembrance of his own errors; and the conviction which powerfully pleaded in behalf of one so near the confines of the tomb. No jealous pang now rankled in his bosom, as Hamilton called down blessings on the virtuous head of Susan; but with fervent, though silent, energy, his heart uttered responsive invocations, while it throbbled with eagerness to

repair, by unfailing future devotion, the injustice of his past conduct.

In a few hours Hamilton breathed his last; and, although no parent, wife, or sister smoothed his dying pillow, there stood around him those who watched his parting breath with true affection—who recognised the noble dispositions of an honorable and an upright nature amid the errors which ill-directed passions had led him to commit.

The tears of Susan fell fast as she heard from her husband the recital of poor Hamilton's last hours. She was, indeed, too weak to repress them; but, as she leaned her head upon his breast, in whom she now confided with all a wife's affection and respect, she felt conscious it was a weakness which he would excuse, and in which he participated with a delicacy which she knew well how to prize: he concealed the pain her grief occasioned him, since he could not judge of its extent, by reverting to his own unfortunate intimacy with the Contesse de Rambouillet previous to his marriage—told her in what manner he had become dependent on her by the enormous debts he had incurred, and which, fearing to betray to his father, he had suffered her to defray by large and frequent loans. "Thank heaven," continued he, "the motives which actuated her, in thus rendering me dependent on her, could not be understood by the heart of one capable of loving you as I do. Never has one thought of attachment to that vile person sullied the affection which can be claimed by one alone; and which, I trust, to render worthy of being valued."

Susan returned the tender embrace as she spoke; and though she would not add one pang to a husband's heart, by reverting to her past feelings, she knew that there was now no concealment between them; and gratefully acknowledged the goodness of that heavenly guidance which had held her in the path of duty, and hallowed every trial. The grave had now closed over



the being who had once possessed the earliest and most enthusiastic passion of her devoted heart, and one like that of Susan is rarely destined to experience a second; but she who was capable of feeling so ardently had, in the depth of her affectionate nature, a tenderness which, heightened as it was by her powerful sense of religion, and the knowledge which that religion teaches of a wife's duty, might well supply the place of youthful and inconsiderate passion; nor could the most anxiously jealous affection have found room for complaint in the watchful and unceasing tenderness with which she repaid a husband's love and kindness.

The final rupture which Lord de Tracey was now determined to make with the Contesse de Rambouillet was soon effected, by the immediate reimbursement which he made to her of his debt; and by the knowledge of which she was now possessed of his having been informed of all her criminality.

This was effected through the friendliness of Lord Frederick Ashton; for Lord de Tracey was firmly resolved never again to behold one whose wickedness had almost signed the doom of his wretchedness, and so deeply injured the peace of his beloved wife; and with mingled hatred and despair at the overturn of her malignant schemes, and the baffled attempts she had made to gratify an odious and disgraceful passion,—the Contesse de Rambouillet left Florence; nor did her hateful presence again impair the peace of those whom she had sought to divide.

Lord de Tracey now resolved on hastening to England, whither the late death of his father called him for the settlement of his affairs. His happiness was not destined to continue in interrupted sunshine, and it was surely to be traced alike to the justice of divine appointment, as to that wisdom and benignity which works its gracious effects by the agency of means painful to nature's feelings, that he whose departures from virtuous principle and action called for the chas-

tening of affliction, should meet his punishment in the crushing of his newly awakened joys ; and that she who acknowledged a wife's renewed call to unison of heart and mind with the partner of her life, who was the father of her child, should learn, in the hour of weeping sympathy, her sole earthly dependence on Him who was her only earthly Guide ; and become far more endeared by the bonds of mutual affliction than she had been if the sunshine of present prosperity had dazzled her into forgetful joy.

The sickness, with which her infant was assailed not long after its birth, fixed on its frail existence every thought which might have wandered to the remembrance of her early, and now buried lover :—and when, at length, her own and her husband's mutual anxiety terminated in the blight and decay of this tender blossom—the tears which she shed over its remains mingled with his ; and hushed, by their silent, but eloquent, power, every other recollection.

“I have deserved this,” said Lord de Tracey, as he gazed on the marble stillness of his late infant ; but you—”

“Hush, dearest,” said Susan as she laid her hand solemnly upon his. “Let us not murmur.”

When the convicted conscience of a man of the world turns to the retrospect of his own errors, and compares them with the blameless tenor of a virtuous woman's life, he sees that in his past conduct which seems to exonerate her from all imputation of blame, especially if that woman be the object of his love, and, with all the energy of self-condemnation, and in the ignorance of better knowledge, he falsely deems her innocent. But she who has erected a higher standard of that excellence to which she aspires is better acquainted with the deceitfulness of the heart, recognises in the course of the purest morality of life, deviations innumerable of heart and inclinations ; sees through the mist through which the trial of flattering

affections would disguise her errors ; and, acknowledging the justice and love of that Being who would lead her through the fiery trial to more strenuous exertion and final triumph, bows to the righteous decree, and kisses the chastening rod.

Lord de Tracey spoke but the language of his heart, when he deemed his Susan undeserving of that affliction, under which they mutually suffered ; nor was she less sincere in the earnestness with which she sought to claim its justice to herself.

It was a mournful day on which, bidding adieu to their kind and faithful friends Lord and Lady Frederick Ashton, Lord de Tracey and his weeping Susan, followed the remains of their dear infant to the burying place at Leghorn.

The prohibition made at Florence, against the consecration of ground in that place for Protestant interment, rendered this journey necessary ; and they proposed embarking thence in one of the British merchant vessels for England. Thus at once choosing a speedy method for being conveyed thither, and sparing to Susan the additional fatigue of so long a journey by land.

The sight of a newly laid turf in the burying place, to which the body of their child was assigned, reminded its sorrowing parents of the unhappy being so lately the cause of emotions so powerful and distressing, and Susan could not withhold her admiration at the kindness of feeling which prompted her husband to erect a stone to the memory of one who had been long deprived of any connected with him to perform that office of sacred respect.

Her heart was filled with tender gratitude, and halloed a sorrow by which it was indeed made better ; and, with mingled feelings of hope and regret, she entered the vessel which was to bear her and Lord de Tracey to their native shore.

There was one circumstance which occasioned her a degree of anxiety she could scarcely repress. It was the long silence of her beloved father and sister.

By some mistake on the address of Gilbert's letter, that which he had so hastily penned at beginning of General Falkland's illness had met with long delay; nor was it till after the departure of Lord and Lady de Tracey, for England, that it was claimed at the Florence post-office, by Lord Frederick Ashton. It was well for poor Susan that this additional trial of her fortitude was thus spared her, and that the mournful news of her father's danger was not added to a mother's sorrow.

## CHAPTER XVII.

"Fare the weel, thou first and fairest!  
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest!  
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,  
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure!  
Ae fond kiss, and then we sever!  
Ae farewell, alas, for ever!  
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,  
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee!"

BURNS.

WHEN Evelyn, accompanied by General Falkland's physician, left the apartment of the aged sufferer, in which his anxious daughter had taken her station for the night, and in obedience to their request, reclined on the couch near the bed; a ray of hope, which had been for many days withheld with regard to his recovery, lent to his anxiety more of animation, and less of sorrow.

All had been done that the tenderest love and care could effect on his behalf, and the sad precaution to which necessity had impelled him for the future consolation of his beloved, in the event of the sad termination of their fears, left him no more to do but to await the will of Providence with as much resignation as he found possible to acquire. But, although one more accustomed to such anxieties slept beside him, the deep and agonizing suspense of Evelyn's mind held his eyes wakeful, as he sat in the room adjoining that of the invalid, by the slumbering doctor.

Hours passed in quiet, and still the old man slept, or seemed to sleep. Often did Gilbert catch, by the intense watchfulness of his hearing, the sound of Margaret's soft footstep, as she walked to the side of her beloved parent, to listen to his breathing, and then returned to her couch. Often did he hear, or fancy he heard, the gentle sigh which came from her gentle

heart, and amid all his apprehensions, and alternate hopes and fears respecting the valuable life of his aged friend, a more powerful emotion struggled for the mastery, and kept alive an excitement from which he felt that death alone could wholly free him. Little could he guess how much sympathy with his feelings could be breathed amid those sighs. The brightest dream of his hopes had scarcely dared to whisper to his heart the tender gratitude with which, when retiring from a father's couch, she saw through the half-open door, the shadow of his form by the light of the solitary taper which stood beside him, and how much of fondness, mingled with that most grateful sentiment, while she thanked heaven for such a friend.

The timidity natural to such a feeling in a woman's breast had been increased in that of Margaret, not only by a dread of revealing the secret of her own heart to one who no longer sought it, but by the guarded conduct of Lord Ormiston himself, who, dreading to invade her sacred sorrow by one selfish expression of his dearest wishes, was still farther deterred from doing so by his ignorance of those circumstances which had effaced from her heart every hope of past affection.

From these she had turned with all the wounded pride of woman's nature, when she learnt the fallacy of her imagination, with regard to the object of Hamilton's affection, and when, in addition to the knowledge she possessed of his love for her sister, which had at once extinguished all wish to claim that love herself, she saw the anxiety of her dear father to bring consolation to her heart by forgetfulness of the past—she had tried, and had not vainly tried, to banish from her memory the very semblance of mortified affection.

The disposition of this amiable girl was far less romantic than that of her sister, and this was, perhaps, to her, the source of a livelier happiness, as well as more necessary to her well-being, for her judgment was less able to correct the imprudence to which such a disposition inclines the possessor.

Believing, as she had long believed, the heart of Hamilton to be in her keeping, she loved him with all the affectionate ardour of a pure and innocent heart, which longed to increase the happiness of the object of its fondness by bestowing on him a hand which he had clasped from infancy with a sister's affection, and which, in ignorance of Hamilton's, and her sister's, concealed passion, she regarded as her own. In this hope she was encouraged by the constant attention of a man, who, not naturally vain, and blinded by the intensity of stronger feelings, lavished on her a tenderness which his circumstances bade him, in honor, to withhold from the being of his adoration; nor was it, till aroused from his dream by the world's voice, that he discovered his error and its unhappy consequences.

These had now been long beheld by Margaret in the light with which truth had invested them, and when she awoke to the consciousness of her error, she awoke also in the pride of woman's heart, resolved to triumph over unrequited love, though still her tenderness refused to part with the memory of a friend so long beloved, without many a regret for his unhappy fate.

It was with these softening reflections that she turned to the recollection of one as amiable, as long known, as endeared to her by a thousand remembrances of childhood's enjoyments and youth's happy hours, and when she again beheld him now released by death from an engagement which her heart whispered had been entered upon in the hour of disappointment on her own account, these thoughts of friendly regard warmed into a dearer sentiment. She was not now so great a stranger to the language of her own heart as to be ignorant of the tender anxiety with which she found it to be invaded; nor could that anxiety fail to be increased, when she saw the coldness and reserve of his once devoted manner, a coldness which he preserved even amid the kindness with which he attended the illness of his aged friend and guardian, and the solici-

tude which he continued to shew for her future well-being and consolation.

These thoughts would recur to Margaret, as the long hours of the night seemed yet longer, while watching the sleep of a beloved father, from which his waking was to decide her misery or rejoicing. With what eagerness did she await the first faint glimpse of dawn as it darted through the half closed shutter of the sick chamber.

Those only can appreciate the throbbing agony of her suspense who, like her, have watched beside the dear object of their affection at such an hour, and cast the issue of their hopes on the first faint words of their awakening. She listened to the rural sounds which ushered in the approach of morning, and heard the song of the early bird with a hope that would not suffer her to breathe—so deep was its intensity. She thought it sounded like the voice of nature's gratitude, and with a gush of tears, which the ardour of her renewed hopes brought to her eyes, she poured forth a prayer of heart-felt thanksgiving, beside her father's bed. At length, he awoke, and, pressing the hand which lay by his, he blessed her, with a clearer voice than she had heard for many days; and expressed himself much refreshed by his sleep. "Kiss me, Margaret," said he, "I think I shall be with you a little longer than I had expected." A smile played around his pale lips; but Margaret, blinded by her joyful tears, saw it not. But when the first burst of her delight was past, she walked softly into the adjoining chamber, to summon the doctor to her father.

Evelyn was before her—she stretched out her hand to him. "He is better," said she. "Thank God!" was all that he had voice to utter. But these words rung in her delighted ears; and she ceased not to remember their grateful sound with feelings of endearment, which Evelyn would not allow himself to hope. He knew not the change which the knowledge of



another's feelings had wrought on her affections. He did not dream of the possibility of her love being unrequited ; and he little dreamed that the circumstance of his generous offer to his rival was in her keeping, and had exalted her regard for his conduct into more than grateful admiration. It had been well for his happiness, that the delicacy of her feelings had not restrained her from betraying it. It had saved him many a bitter hour of sorrow ; and, had General Falkland not received a sad warning to suppress his own wishes with regard to a daughter's future fate in life, he might have learnt the secret from lips which longed to pour out their gratitude into his ears ; but the old man reflected, with bitter regret, on the urgency with which he had recommended Susan to an union which he feared would prove for ever an unhappy one, and resolved never again to interpose one word which could influence the mind of his daughter towards the fulfilment of his wishes.

The return of that daughter's hope for his recovery soon ripened into certainty ; and with joy she watched with him who was now the best beloved of her heart, the progress of her father's convalescence. His weakness was long and extreme ; but fear no longer mingled with the constant care with which they bestowed their assiduous and tender attentions on his hours of languor and debility.

The advance of early spring found General Falkland once more almost restored to his usual health, and still his young and faithful friend was with him and his happy daughter. Mr. Montgomery, and his good and pious chaplain, relieved by their friendly presence those hours in which he persuaded Margaret to take the benefit of the fresh air ; and the good old General's heart was often cheered by the hope that his child might become one day united to the amiable being whom he sometimes prayed might accompany her in those walks to relieve the dullness which he said he

knew so young a creature must experience from attendance, in a sick chamber, on an old man. But, without seeming to refuse his request, Margaret avoided such a possibility by the care she took not to intrude, as she termed it, on the lonely rides and walks of Lord Ormiston.

To this she was actuated by the distance and reserve which she observed, or fancied she observed, in his manners towards herself; and she was perhaps justified in drawing such conclusions from the hopelessness with which he still entertained an ardent and devoted affection. Often did he watch at a distance the sylph-like form which moved through the opening verdure of the budding trees, and mark with bitter anguish the slowness of her gentle tread, which he remembered once so buoyant and lively. He could not but intensely mourn over the ill-fated affection which he thought was the cause of her melancholy and depression; and yet he felt now he could scarcely wish, with such disinterested devotedness, those hopes to be realised which would prove for ever the destruction of his own.

The rose of her once laughing cheek was faded; and the smile with which she greeted a father's eye relapsed in other hours into an expression of melancholy, for which he assigned a cause fatal to the dream of bliss which in his happier moments he could not bring himself to banish from his imagination. But he knew this could not last; and when he saw the health of her father once more regaining its usual strength, he felt as if he were doing wrong by remaining longer in society so fatal to his peace of mind, and which was the means of destroying every other energy. "I must leave her," he often said to himself. "I will go for awhile upon the continent, and try the effect of other scenes. To-morrow I will acquaint General Falkland of my determination to bid him adieu;" but to-morrow came, and still he lingered.

At length the day arrived on which he resolved to declare his purpose ; and, seating himself by General Falkland, he endeavored to assume a cheerfulness, by which he hoped to conceal the reason of his determination, and acquainted him in a few words with his resolution to travel for a year in other lands. "I have need," he said, "to rub a little of my rusticity from my lonely old-fashioned manners, and shall never be fit for your society, if I do not alter from what I am now."

He spoke the last words with a bitterness that startled his old friend, though he had not penetration at that moment to guess the cause, nor the opportunity of expressing his wonder at it ; for at that moment Margaret entered the room. A momentary blush passed over her countenance, as her eyes involuntarily met those of Evelyn ; and there was in their expression an emotion which she felt, though she could not discern its meaning.

She held in her hand a nosegay of early flowers, which she gathered daily to place by the side of her father, and, putting them into his hand, she said hastily, that she must go to change her walking attire, when her father arrested her.

"Stay one moment, love," said he ; "I thought that you and Lord Ormiston had been together, enjoying the beauty of this spring day ; but, instead of that, he comes in from his lonely walk, with a story in his mouth which he has no right to tell me. What do you think it is ? He is going to leave us."

Margaret became pale as death : her knees trembled beneath her, and she vainly endeavored to utter a word.

"He says," continued General Falkland, "that he is not fit society for any one ; and truly, Margaret, you make him appear very ungallant, by leaving him to ride alone, while you wander in that garden, and do not allow him to attend you."

"Lord Ormiston is the best judge of his own inclinations," said Margaret with some pique ; "but I trust

to his friendship for you not to leave you till you are better."

Lord Ormiston cast a reproachful look at her, as she spoke, but she did not see it. Her eyes were fixed upon the ground; and she was glad when a servant entered, bearing letters and newspapers in his hands, some of which he placed in hers, the perusal of which diverted her thoughts for a moment to another theme; or at least afforded her a pretence for their appearing to be so.

The news which these letters contained were not, for a few moments, understood by the disturbed understanding of her who read them; but after a moment in which she struggled to conceal her emotion, she hastily left the room, and, in the solitude of her own chamber, learnt at once the truth of her sister's late misfortune, and of the death of the unhappy Hamilton.

This was disclosed to her by her sister's pen, and that of Lord Frederick Ashton; and it was some time ere her mind could recover from the astonishment which mingled with her feelings of sorrow for the loss which Susan had sustained—indescribable emotion at the relation of her poor friend's melancholy end; and joy for the returning hopes of happiness, which she read in every line of her sister's account of a husband's love and kindness, and at the prospect, so soon to be fulfilled, of beholding Susan once again in her dear home.

It was impossible that one so affectionate should have repressed the tear of friendship from the untimely and unhappy end of poor Hamilton—nor could a tender woman refrain from lamenting an infant's early removal from an earthly, to a heavenly, parent's bosom; but the soft sadness which, for many days after, brought tears to her eyes, was far differently interpreted by him who watched her every expression with a devoted lover's solicitude; and the determination which he had made to strive by absence to overcome

his hopeless attachment, he now declared to be finally resolved on ; nor could the entreaties of General Falkland dissuade him from his purpose.

"Alas ! my dear child," said he, one evening to his daughter, as she sat beside his couch, "would that you could have fixed your affections on the being *who* once lived but to enjoy and increase their happiness :—would that you could even now forget the memory of the departed so as to prize the hopes of their return ! But he has ceased to wish that now ; he leaves us in two days." Fortunately for Margaret, the deepening twilight hid the struggling emotions which overpowered her ; and, scarcely replying, she left the room.

She had lately experienced much trial in the endeavors she had found herself called on to make, in cheering her old friend Mr. Montgomery. He had deeply felt the loss of the child of his first and only love ; and she had been much affected by the sight of one usually so hard, softened into all the tenderness of grief by the renewal of past remembrances which this event had occasioned in his heart.

It was to her pure and pious mind, however, a blessed observation, that the thoughts of this aged person had lately seemed to be directed to religious considerations : nor did she fail to rejoice in the gradual and softening influence which she saw these were obtaining over him. The time was approaching, in which his past afflictions were proving the means of being to that blighted heart a happiness far more enduring than that which he had once enjoyed by anticipation, but of which he had been deprived by the world's mutability ; and, if any thing could have cheered her under the bitter disappointment which Evelyn's change of heart occasioned, it was the pious hope that the soul of one so highly valued was rescued from the despair of worldly sorrow, and restored to seek its happiness from an unfailing and enduring source.

On the morning preceding that of Lord Ormiston's intended departure, a letter was put into General Falkland's hands, marked Dover. It was from Susan. They had just landed in safety. Her health was much strengthened by the voyage, and she expected, after a few days spent in Town, for the necessary arrangement of her husband's affairs, to set off for Scotland. Her letter concluded with these words:—"With what joy shall I once more behold my dearest father and sister, words cannot express it; nor can I realize the thoughts of my happiness, it is so great; but if there be ought which can increase it, it is the knowledge which I have of its being so entirely shared with those who will rejoice in beholding my happy fate, in being united with one so perfectly amiable as my beloved Edwin; and who feels no less in the prospect of being once more in your kind arms than your happy and affectionate daughter,

SUSAN."

Tears streamed downed the cheeks of the good old man as he perused this letter. "Now," said he to Evelyn, "my dear boy, what excuse can you make for leaving us? You must stay to participate in our rejoicings." Evelyn shook his head mournfully.

"Do not tempt me," said he, with a strong effort to master his feelings; but it was in vain, and hastily rising, he left the room. Poor Margaret found it a task of much difficulty to conceal the agony of her emotions: but the joy which filled the heart of her father, in the prospect of again beholding his daughter, of whose happiness he felt now assured, enabled her more easily to turn his attention from that which was comparatively a transient interest to him: but she felt relieved when fatigue, from the excitement which he had undergone that day, made him feel the necessity of seeking repose, and she found herself in the solitude of her own chamber.

At length, worn out with busy and agonizing reflections, she repaired to her garden, where she wandered in melancholy abstraction till the shades of evening reminded her it was now time to return home.

She had gathered a few flowers, and was standing gazing on them with vacancy, when she raised her eyes, and saw before her the bower in which she had planted the jessamine which Evelyn had asked her a year ago to take care of for his sake. The long grass stems were carefully twined amid the roses and eglantine, whose earlier verdure almost concealed them; and tears came to her eyes as she said to herself—“Yes, everything has promise of bloom now but that. Spring returns; but, alas! the hopes which would have once had power to fill my heart with joy are scarcely thought of while he shuns me.”

She turned mournfully away, and repaired towards the castle. The door of her father's sitting-room was half open, and she entered gently, fearing he might still be asleep on the sofa; he was gone; and advancing towards the table, she was just about to place the flowers she had gathered in his favorite vase, when a well-known voice startled her, though its tones were low.

“General Falkland is gone to dress,” said Evelyn. Lord Ormiston was seated by the window, but arose as he spoke. It seemed as if he had something on his mind which he wished to utter, but could not find power to do so. Margaret was no less disturbed; and scarcely knowing what she did, and assuming a cheerfulness which she did not feel, she said, “Perhaps you will not disdain one of these humble flowers; they have, at least, the sweetness of spring in their fading leaves.”

Evelyn advanced with eagerness to claim the offered flower. Her hands shook as she endeavored to select one, and they fell to the ground. “Oh, Margaret,” said Evelyn, “you have thrown them all away, but I must have one from that hand. The last—the only one I shall ever obtain.”

As she stooped to gather the flowers, a tear fell upon the hand which assisted her; she feared she had betrayed herself, and stood motionless. The sound of her own name, once more repeated by that voice, in accents so mournful, yet so tender, might have told her that she did not feel alone, and, though she did not dare yet to believe her happiness, her heart throbbed with unutterable joy. "Margaret!" he again said, "may I hope when this is withered you may not quite have forgotten him who dares not ask for that which alone could save him from wretchedness? Will you tell me that this sweet drop is shed, at least, in pity for your poor devoted Evelyn?"

He took her soft and powerless hand as he spoke, but the bitterness of his sorrow was soon exchanged for joy so pure and exquisite that, in that moment, his happiness was scarcely realized from its fervent transport. The tears of his beloved were shed on his delighted breast, and, through the broken accents of her gentle voice, he heard the confirmation of his bliss.

It need scarcely be said that his intended departure was no longer the theme of the good old General's reproaches. His approval and blessing were joyfully bestowed on his dear and happy children, and when, a few days after this, he held his Susan once more in his arms, earth did not hold an union of more delighted and grateful hearts than were found within the walls of Walrond castle.

The marriage was soon after solemnised by the aged Mr. M'Farlane amid the tears and smiles of joy of the family and neighborhood, nor did the succeeding years of the united pair belie the hopes which were so fervently made on that day for their future happiness.

Should any lover of good dinners and much talking enquire after the welfare of Lord Sherbourne, his cards of invitation may still be found on many a table in the western world of London, from February to September.



Lady Sherbourne spends her time in making baby caps and buying toys for her grand-children, for both the Misses Sherbourne are now married, though they have disappointed their father's ambitious hopes by making their own rather tardy choice.

Mr. Elliott's hair is grown very grey, but he has still the talent to keep up, at least the show of flirtation with some very young ladies, who do not know him well enough to be aware that the success of their *debut* is, by his own voice, attributed to his "having brought them out."

Mr. Richardson is on the eve of marriage with a pretty Irish girl, who has good sense enough to perceive the good qualities which exist under rather a rough exterior.

Mary Sinclair and her husband have a large family, but they have changed the place of their abode for the neighborhood of Walrond Castle, where Lord and Lady Ormiston attend to their minutest cares, and make them forget the home which they would have left with a tear, had not Sir Thomas M'Call become their landlord by purchase.

Lord and Lady Frederick Ashton are returned to their native land: and live in happy retirement, though not in solitude: and they pay a yearly visit to the friends of their youth.

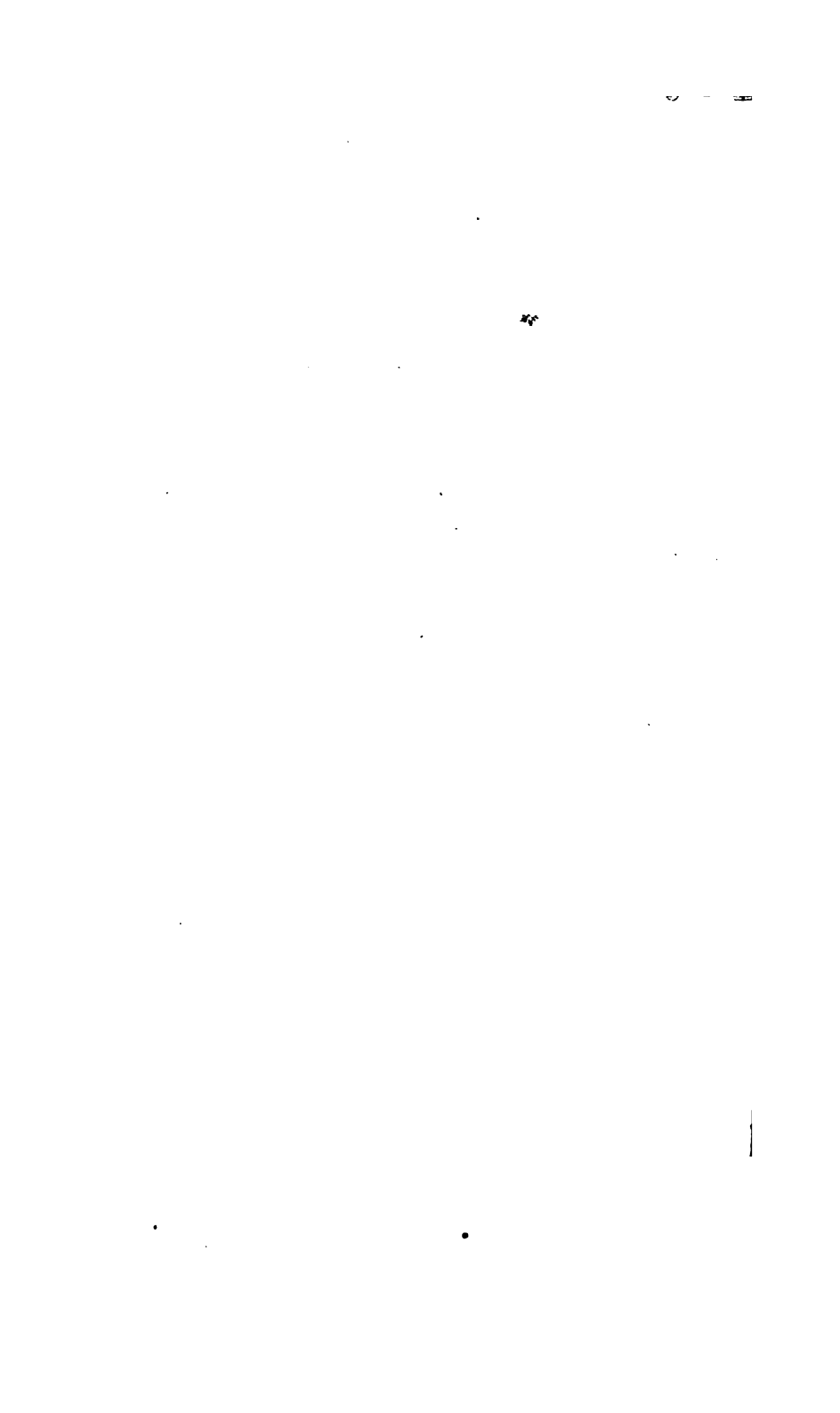
The Contesse de Rambouillet? She has not been heard of for many years; but is still remembered in the prayers of those whom she has wronged. May they be heard!

THE END.

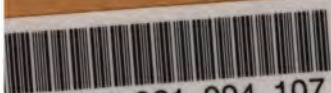












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